

K Virgilianus Manuscript 237e2
THE
WORKS
OF
VIRGIL.

IN ENGLISH VERSE.

The ¹⁰ÆNEID Translated

By the Rev. Mr. CHRISTOPHER PITT,

The ECLOGUES and GEORGICS, with Notes on the Whole,

By the Rev. Mr. JOSEPH WARTON.

With several NEW OBSERVATIONS

By Mr. HOLDSWORTH, Mr. SPENCE, and Others.

ALSO,

A Dissertation on the Sixth Book of the ÆNEID,
by Mr. WARBURTON.

On the Shield of ÆNEAS, by Mr. W. WHITEHEAD.

On the Character of Iapis, by the late Dr. ATTERBURY,
Bishop of Rochester.

And, Three ESSAYS ON PASTORAL, DIDACTIC and
EPIC POETRY, by the EDITOR.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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VOLUME THE FIRST.

CONTAINING

The ECLOGUES and GEORGICS.

The Life of VIRGIL.

TWO ESSAYS ON PASTORAL and DIDACTIC POETRY.

[i]

TO THE

HONOURABLE

Sir GEORGE LYTTETON,

BARONET,

One of the

Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

SIR,

CENSURE is so seldom softened by apologies, that perhaps it may be useless for me to declare my consciousness of inability to do justice to the most perfect of poets, in the following translation. When I first entered upon this work, I sometimes imagined, that I heard the voice of Virgil addressing me with the humanity of his hero;

*Quo moriture ruis? majoraque viribus audes?
Fallit te incautum pietas tua !-----*

for indeed, nothing but my affection for the author could have engaged me in so arduous an undertaking.

VOL. I.

A

Who-

Whoever considers the degree of delicacy and correctness to which the Eclogues of Virgil are polished; together with the ease and wonderful harmony of his numbers; will be convinced of the extreme difficulty of transfusing into another tongue, beauties of so refined and subtile a nature. It requires no small command of language, to be able to carry on Pastoral Dialogues, without sinking into vulgar idioms, to unite simplicity with grace, and to preserve familiarity without flatness. A style too highly elevated would be nauseously unnatural, and one too prosaic and plebeian, would be insipid and unaffecting. And to keep a just mean, is perhaps as difficult in writing as in life.

There are few images and sentiments in the Eclogues of Virgil, but what are drawn from the Idylliums of Theocritus: in whom there is a rural, romantic wildness of thought, heightened by the Doric dialect; with such lively pictures of the passions, and of simple unadorned nature, as are infinitely pleasing to such lovers and judges of true poetry as yourself. Theocritus is indeed the great store-house of pastoral description; and every succeeding painter of rural beauty (except THOMSON in his Seasons,) hath copied his images from him, without ever looking abroad upon the face of nature themselves.

And

And thus a set of hereditary objects has been continued from one poet to another, which have been often made use of without any propriety either as to age or climate.

But Virgil never borrowed an idea from his Sicilian master, without beautifying and heightening it with the lustre of his language. And perhaps it may be observed in general, that if the Romans ever excelled their Grecian masters in the graces of diction, it was owing to their exerting all their powers, in dressing up those thoughts and ideas that were ready found to their hands. The mind can attend but to one object at once, with any vigour and intenseness: and if it be big and dilated with the conception and creation of new images, has scarce leisure to adorn them with that pomp of studied expression, which the writer that coolly copies them, can bestow upon them.

Indeed of all authors, either ancient or modern, Virgil seemeth to be the most perfect in his style; I mean in the poems he lived to finish. There is a profusion of the most daring metaphors and most glowing figures, there is a majesty and magnificence of diction throughout the Georgics, that notwithstanding the marvellous harmony and grandeur of the Greek versification, is scarcely

ly excelled by Homer himself. Our author's terms and epithets are chosen with such propriety, elegance and expressiveness, that, as Mr. Addison finely observes, "We receive
 " more strong and lively ideas of things
 " from his words, than we could have done
 " from the objects themselves: and find our
 " imaginations more affected by his descriptions,
 " than they would have been by the
 " very sight of what he describes." We may justly therefore apply to him what Aristotle thought so high a commendation of Homer: that he found out LIVING WORDS. If the arrows which are *impatient* to destroy, and the spears that *thirst* to drink blood, are so deservedly admired in the Iliad, Virgil doubtless merits equal praise, for giving life and feeling, love and hatred, hope and fear, wonder and ambition, to plants and to trees, and to the very earth itself: and for exalting his favourite insects, by endowing them with reason, passions, arts, and civil government. To use Aristotle's expression, *Every thing in this poem hath manners*, and all the creation is animated.

But alas! since this is the case, what must become of a translator of the Georgics, writing in a language not half so lofty, so founding, or so elegant as the Latin, incapable of admitting many of its best and boldest

boldest figures, and heavily fettered with the Gothick shackles of rhyme! Is not this endeavouring to imitate a palace of porphyry with flints and bricks? A poem whose excellence peculiarly consists in the graces of diction is far more difficult to be translated, than a work where sentiment, or passion, or imagination, is chiefly displayed. So that I fear we can receive but a faint notion of the beauty of the Georgics from any English version of them. An engraving may indeed faithfully represent the subject, but can give no idea of the *colouring* of one of Titian's landscapes. Besides, the meanness of the terms of husbandry is concealed and lost in a dead language, and they convey no low or despicable image to the mind; but the coarse and common words I was necessitated to use in the following translation, viz. *plough and sow, wheat, dung, ashes, horse and cow, &c.* will, I fear, unconquerably disgust many a delicate reader, if he doth not make proper allowances for a modern compared with an ancient language; and doth not frequently recollect,

—— *verbis ea vincere magnum
Quam sit! & angustis hunc addere rebus honorem.*

So just is the observation of Boileau, "that
" a mean or common thought expressed in

“ pompous diction, generally pleases more
“ than a new or noble sentiment delivered in
“ low and vulgar language ; because the
“ number is greater of those whom custom
“ has enabled to judge of words, than
“ whom study has qualified to examine
“ things.” In short, the Georgics are the
highest flight of Virgil, and the master-pieces
of his genius. Some of the transitions with
which they are adorned, are the boldest and
most daring imaginable, and hold very much
of the enthusiasm of the ancient lyrics ; and
I think one may venture to affirm, that this
poem contains more original unborrowed
beauties, and is more perfect in its kind as a
Didactic, than the Aeneid as an Epic poem.
Of this last work, give me leave to say, that
I have ever observed, persons of elevated and
sublime imaginations are more captivated with
the Iliad, and men of elegant and tender
minds with the Aeneid. He that peruses
Homer, is like the traveller that surveys
mount Atlas ; the vastness and roughness of
its rocks, the solemn gloominess of its pines
and cedars, the everlasting snows that cover
its head, the torrents that rush down its sides,
and the wild beasts that roar in its caverns,
all contribute to strike the imagination
with inexpressible astonishment and awe.
While reading the Aeneid is like behold-
ing the Capitoline hill at Rome, on which
stood

stood many edifices of exquisite architecture, and whose top was crowned with the famous temple of Jupiter, adorned with the spoils of conquered Greece.

If the design of the *Aeneid* was to compliment Augustus, and reconcile the Romans to the government of the Julian family; if, as Mr. Pope was used to say, *it was evidently as much a party-piece, as Absalom and Achitophel*; you, Sir, are too warm a lover of liberty and the virtue of ancient Rome, not to censure the poet as an abject flatterer; unless you will allow the validity of the usual excuse for his conduct, viz. that as the commonwealth maxims were no longer practicable, and a change in the government was unavoidable, after the last struggle for liberty at Philippi had ended so unfortunately, and even the virtuous Messalla had thought it no shame to submit to the conqueror, Virgil believed it would be the best service he could then do his countrymen, to endeavour to soften their minds towards so mild and gentle a master as Augustus, out of whose hands it was impossible for them to extort the power he had usurped. And that some change in the constitution of Rome was absolutely necessary, seems to be the opinion of that admirable writer and penetrating politician, the president Montesquieu: “It must be ac-

“ knowledged, says he, that the Roman
“ laws were too weak to govern the republic,
“ lic, when it was arrived at its height: experience
“ has proved it to be an invariable
“ fact, that good and just laws, which raise
“ the reputation and power of a small republic,
“ become improper and useless to
“ it, when once its grandeur is established,
“ because it was the natural effect of such
“ laws to make a people great, but not to govern
“ them when made so.” He adds afterwards with his usual pregnant brevity,
“ Take this compendium of the Roman
“ history: they subdued all the nations by
“ their maxims; but when they had so far
“ succeeded, their republic could not subsist
“ any longer: the plan of their government
“ must be changed, and maxims contrary
“ to the first, being then introduced,
“ they were divested of all their grandeur.”

As to the poetical faults of the *Aeneid* I believe they are but few. What may seem the most liable to censure in the conduct of this poem, is the making Dido a far more interesting and striking character than Lavinia, upon whom the whole action turns. But this circumstance is surely excuseable, if we reflect how great a stroke of art the poet has exhibited, in assigning this origin of the inveterate enmity betwixt the rival powers of Rome and Carthage;

Carthage ; who were so often engaged in those important and bloody contentions of which Lucretius speaks so sublimely ;

*Omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu,
Horrida contremuere sub altis aetheris auris,
In dubioque fuit sub utrorum regna cadendum
Omnibus humanis esset terraque marique.*

L. iii. 845.

And farther ; those who censure Lavinia as a tame and insipid character, should consider the retired nature of female education among the ancients ; for if VIRGIL had painted this beautiful young princess any otherwise than full of modesty and reservedness, silent and obedient to her parents, he had falsified the manners of the age of which he wrote : in which the fair sex were not permitted to make that conspicuous figure in life they have since done, to the great ornament and improvement of human society.

There are two particulars more, which perhaps will not so easily admit of an excuse. One is, a manifest want of variety of characters in the Aeneid, where the few that are introduced are not sufficiently diversified : Homer's Achilles, Ajax, Diomedes and Hector, are all brave ; and Ulysses and Nestor are wise ; but then each of these heroes is *brave*

and is *wise*, in a manner eminently different from the other. “The characters of Virgil (says Mr. Pope) “are far from striking us “in this open manner; they lie in a great “degree hidden and undistinguished, and “where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. “His characters of valour are much alike; “even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar, but as it is in a different degree; and “we see nothing that differences the courage “of Mnestheus from that of Sergestus, Cloanthus, and the rest.” Perhaps it may be urged, that the character of Aeneas, which is entirely of our poet’s own formation, and in which wisdom, piety, and courage are so happily blended and tempered with each other, may in some measure atone for this deficiency.—The other seeming blemish is, that in reading the last six books, one cannot forbear pitying Turnus, who undoubtedly ought to have been drawn with some fault or other to have excited our aversion, or raised our indignation. But to see a valiant young prince, robbed of a mistress whom he passionately loved and who returned his passion, and to whom he was even betrothed; nay to behold him murdered, while he fights to maintain his claim to her, by a perfect stranger, who has nothing to plead for his conduct but the gods and oracles; are circumstances that
while

while they prejudice the reader against Aeneas, deeply interest him for Turnus. It were to be wished the poet had either given the latter some unamiable quality, or else had represented Lavinia as averse to the match. All that can be said in defence of this proceeding is, that the present readers of Virgil judge of it in a manner different from the Romans to whom he wrote; who probably looked on Turnus as justly punished for having broke the solemn truce agreed to in the twelfth book, and for fighting against the will of heaven; and moreover might view this gallant prince in an unfavourable light as he opposed the establishment of that person in Italy,

———*Genus unde Latinum*
Albanique patres, atque alta moenia Romae.

Thus am I rashly endeavouring to pick out seeming blemishes and defects in this admirable writer, while I should be making some apology for undertaking the following translation, after so many persons of eminence, and particularly Mr. Dryden, for whose name and writings I have the sincerest veneration and love. But I must at the same time beg leave to observe, with truth, and I hope with modesty, that in his version of the Eclogues and Georgics, which is certainly

tainly inferior to his *Aeneid*, there are so many gross mistakes, so many careless incorrect lines, and such wild deviations from his original, as are utterly astonishing in so great and true a genius. But instead of the invidious and disagreeable task of pointing out these passages at length, I chuse rather to say in those generous words of Mr. Pope on a similar occasion, "that nothing could
 " have made Mr. Dryden capable of such
 " mistakes, but extreme haste in writing;
 " which never ought to be imputed as a
 " fault to him, but to those who suffered so
 " noble a genius to lie under the necessity of
 " it."

And I have still a weightier reason for not specifying these blameable passages; which is, that I am apprehensive, an equal, or perhaps a greater number of my own lines, might be produced on the same occasion. Justice obligeth me to add, that even in the midst of these lownesses and inequalities of Mr. Dryden, his native spirit and vigour, the *veteris vestigia flammae*, frequently break forth: and I have deeply felt how difficult it is to work after so great a master on the same subject.

Give me leave to intrude on your patience
 a moment longer, to speak of Mr. Pitt's

version of the Aeneid. I am very well informed that Mr. Pope, notwithstanding his just affection and even veneration for Mr. Dryden, regarded Mr. Pitt's as an excellent translation. It is lucky for me that some of Mr. Dryden's errors in this part of the work have been lately pointed out by a very candid writer, and one who entertains the highest opinion of his genius, to whom, says he, our English poetry is more obliged for its improvements than to any other writer, excepting only Mr. Pope. What I hint at, is one of the chapters upon allegory in Mr. Spence's Polymetis, where that gentleman hath endeavoured to shew, how very little our poets have understood the allegories of the ancients even in their translations of them; and has chosen to instance in Mr. Dryden's translation of Virgil's Aeneid, as he thought him one of our most celebrated poets. The mistakes are very numerous, and some of them unaccountably gross. Upon this I was desirous to examine Mr. Pitt's translation of the same passages, and was surprized to find, that in near fifty instances, which Mr. Spence has given of Mr. Dryden's mistakes of that kind, Mr. Pitt had not fallen into above three or four. A few specimens may not be amiss, to entertain the curiosity of their several readers.

1. *Cum tacit omnis ager.*

Æn. 4. ver. 520.

And peace with downy wings was brooding on the
ground.

Dryden, ver. 752.

Virgil does not mention peace at all on this occasion ; and I do not remember, says Mr. Spence, to have met with any one ancient representation of Peace with wings. Pitt only says :

O'er all the fields a brooding silence reigns.

Pitt, ver. 759.

2. *Jamque rubescebat radiis mare, et aethere ab alto
Aurora in roseis fulgebat lutea bigis.*

Æn. 7. 26.

Now when the rosy morn began to rise,
And wav'd her saffron streamer thro' the skies.

Dryden, ver. 35.

Mr. Dryden here seems to have admitted some mixture of the allegory and the reality together : Virgil is free both from the streamer, and this faulty mixture ; so also is Pitt ;

Now on her car was gay Aurora borne,
And Ocean reddens with the rising morn.

3. *Tum*

3. *Tum quorum attonitae Baccho nemora avia matres
Insultant thiasis, (neque enim leve nomen Amatae)
Undique collecti coeunt, Martemque fatigant.*

Aen. 7. 582.

Then they, (whose mothers frantic with their
fear,
In woods and wilds the flags of Bacchus bear,
And lead his dances with dishevell'd hair,
Increase the clamour, and the war demand—

Dryd. 803.

As he had before given a streamer to Aurora, he here gives flags to the attendants of Bacchus ;

Those too whose mothers by the queen were led,
When fir'd by Bacchus, to the woods she fled,
(Such was her int'rest in the realm) declare
For open arms, and breathe revenge and war.

Pitt, 735.

4. Cybele in another place is drawn by the tygers of Bacchus instead of her own lions.

*Alma parens Idaea deum, cui Dindyma cordi,
Turrigeraeque urbes, bijugique ad froena leones.*

Aen. 10. 253.

Hear

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Hear thou, great mother of the deities,
With turrets crown'd ; (on Ida's holy hill
Fierce tygers rein'd and curb'd, obey thy will.

Dryd. 356.

Great guardian queen, of Ida's hills and woods,
Supreme, majestic mother of the gods !
Whose strong defence proud towering cities share,
While roaring lions whirl thy mighty car.

Pitt, 366.

5. *Hic, ubi disiectas moles, avulsaque saxis
Saxa vides, mixtoque undantem pulvere fumum,
Neptunus muros, magnoque emota tridenti
Fundamenta quatit ; totamque ab sedibus urbem
Eruit——*

Aen. 2. 612.

This exalted passage Mr. Dryden has thus translated :

Amid that smother, Neptune holds his place,
Below the wall's foundation drives his mace,
And heaves the building from the solid base. 829. }

Where it is to be observed he has divested Neptune of his trident, and equipped him with a Gothic mace. That Pitt hath restored the god his proper *insignia*, is much the least part of his praise in this sublime passage :

Where

Where yon' rude piles of shatter'd ramparts rise,
 Stone rent from stone, a dreadful ruin lies,
 And black with rolling smoke the dusty whirl-
 wind flies :

There Neptune's trident breaks the bulwarks
 down,

There from her basis heaves the trembling town.

Pitt, 812.

6. ————— *Paterque Sabinus*

Vitifator, curvam servans sub imagine falcem.

Aen. 7. 179.

In translating this passage, Mr. Dryden hath made Sabinus lean his head upon his pruning hook, which as it would appear absurd in a statue or picture, cannot be proper in a poetical description.

There stood Sabinus, planter of the vines,
 On a short pruning hook his head reclines,
 And studiously surveys his generous wines.

Dryd. 249.

Sabinus there who prest the foaming wine,
 Extends the hook that prun'd the generous vine.

Pitt, 221.

7. One great occasion of faults in Mr. Dryden in relation to the imaginary beings of the ancients, is owing to his not being sufficiently acquainted with (or not recollecting) their particular qualities, rank and dignity; and this

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this makes him sometimes vary from his original.

*Ecce furens animis aderat Tyrinthius, omnemque
Accessum lustrans, huc ora ferebat et illuc,
Dentibus infrendens. Ter totum fervidus irâ
Lustrat Aventini montem; ter saxea tentat
Limina nequicquam; ter fessus valle resedit.*

Aen. 8. 228.

The wretch had hardly made his dungeon fast,
The fierce avenger came with bounding haste;
Survey'd the mouth of the forbidden hold,
And here and there his raging eyes he roll'd;
He gnash'd his teeth, and thrice he compass round
With winged speed the circuit of the ground.
Thrice at the cavern's mouth he pull'd in vain,
And panting thrice desisted from his pain.

Dryd. 304.

Scarce had the fiend let down th' enormous
weight,
When fierce the god came thund'ring to the gate;
He gnash'd his teeth with rage, the passies try'd,
And roll'd his eager eyes on ev'ry side;
Now here, now there, a fiery glance he threw,
And thrice impetuous round the mountain flew;
Thrice strove to storm the massy gates in vain,
And thrice, o'erspent, fate panting on the plain.

Pitt, 300.

8. Non

8. *Non tulit Alcides animis : seque ipse per ignem
Præcipiti jecit saltû ; quæ plurimus undam
Fumus agit, nebulæque ingens specus æstuat atrâ.*

Aen. 8. 258.

The wrathful god then plunges from above,
And where in thickest waves the sparkles drove,
There lights ; and wades thro' fumes, and gropes
his way,

Half sing'd, half stifled till he grasps his prey.

Dryd. 344.

This last particular is great in Virgil, and little in Dryden ; and fitter for the herdsman hero (as he calls him in the beginning of the story, 279) than the chief of all the heroes who were deified for having acted in this world for the good of mankind. Let us see Mr. Pitt's translation.

With that the vengeful god in fury grew,
And headlong thro' the burning tempest flew ;
Fierce on the fiend, thro' stifling fumes he came,
Thro' streams of smoke and deluges of flame.

ver. 331.

In fine, if my partiality to Mr. Pitt does not mislead me, I should think he has executed his work with great spirit, that he has a fine flow of harmonious versification, and
has

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has rendered his author's sense with faithfulness and perspicuity ; but my testimony can be of little consequence in this case ; and there is no reason to doubt but he will stand by his own intrinsic merit ; which the public hath already sufficiently approved.

I thought it proper to premise these few reflections, on Virgil, on Mr. Pitt, and Myself, before I ventured to give the following translation into your hands ; I dared not say,

——*in Meti descendat judicis aures,*

till I had endeavoured to point out the peculiar difficulties attending this performance, and had obviated any charge of envy, or even of emulation, in attempting it after Mr. Dryden. I have only to add, that among other reasons why I could wish this work may reach posterity, one of the greatest is, that it may be known, I enjoyed the favour and friendship of Sir GEORGE LYTT-
TELTON.

I am, SIR,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

Jan. 1.

1753.

JOSEPH WARTON.

Advertisement.

THE design of the following volumes is to give a poetical translation of all Virgil's works, illustrated with explanations of the difficult, and observations on the beautiful passages. For which purpose, his best critics and commentators have been consulted and made use of, but never quoted without acknowledgment. Besides these assistances, I must inform the reader, that Mr. Spence hath promoted this undertaking with that warmth and readiness with which he always serves his friends, by communicating to me a great number of manuscript notes of the late Mr. Holdsworth, author of *Muscipula*, &c: who by residing many years in Italy, and by making Virgil his constant companion in his travels, had an opportunity of being very exact in his observations on his favourite author. Many of them, that are local, and relate to the soil, the climate and customs of Italy, will I believe be found extremely curious and useful. Mr. Spence likewise obliged me with several excellent remarks

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marks of his own, made when he was abroad, that were never yet published, and with some few of Mr. Pope's. His *Polymetis* also hath greatly enriched the following collection. I must not neglect to return my thanks to Mr. Warburton, for giving leave that his most learned and ingenious dissertation on the sixth book of the *Aeneid* might be here inserted; which the reader will find much altered and enlarged with several valuable additions. Mr. William Whitehead hath contributed to the usefulness and beauty of this work by giving it what Virgil has long wanted, a design for the shield of Aeneas. He hath added a dissertation on this subject, wherein are some curious remarks on the Roman history, which it is not strange that he should understand, who has made one of its greatest heroes appear so nobly on our * stage. To my learned and ingenious friend Mr. Samuel Johnson I am very much obliged; not only for his elegant essay on Pastoral Poetry, but for several most judicious remarks and observations scattered through the whole. It was thought proper not to omit in this edition, Bishop Atterbury's celebrated conjecture, concerning Iapis, in the twelfth book of the *Aeneid*. It may be necessary likewise to take notice here that Mr. Pitt has borrowed about sixty lines

* In his tragedy called the Roman Father.

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lines from Mr. Dryden, and I myself about a dozen, and a remark or two in the life of Virgil. I am indebted also to Mr. Benson for some observations, and for six lines of his translation of the two first Georgics. For the rest I am answerable; and I hope those readers that are able to judge, who are likewise ever most inclined to pardon, will excuse the smaller faults and inadvertencies that will necessarily happen in the course of so long a work. I begin now most sensibly to perceive the force of that saying of a French author: "When a man writes, he ought to animate himself with the thoughts of pleasing all the world; but he is to renounce that hope, the very moment the book goes out of his hands."



THE

THE

L I F E

O F

V I R G I L.

WE have an eager Desire to be thoroughly acquainted with the minutest Circumstances in the Lives of those who have made themselves greatly eminent. It is probably owing to this Curiosity, that the Writings of old *Montagne*, notwithstanding his Excursions and Irregularities, are found so amusing and delightful. *Plutarch* observes, that the true Genius, and characteristical Turn of Men's Minds, are best to be gathered from the small and esteemingly inconsiderable Particulars of their Lives and Fortunes. It were to be wished Antiquity furnished us with any Light of this sort with Regard to our celebrated Poet. But we have very few materials to gather from; only some scattered Remarks of old Commentators and Grammarians, and a Life written by *Tiberius Donatus*, (by some falsely supposed to be St. *Jerom's* Master) whose Authenticity *Ruæus* hath taken great Pains to explode and destroy. What can best be depended upon seemeth to be as follows.

VOL. I.

B

PUB-

PUBLIUS VIRGILIUS MARO was born on the fifteenth Day of *October* in the year of *Rome* 684, in the Consulship of *Pompey* and *Crassus*, at a Village called *Andes*, now *Petula*, not far from *Man-tua*. His Father's Name was *Virgil*, according to the Opinion of *Servius* and *Probus*; for if he had been called *Maro*, as *Donatus* affirms, our Poet's Name must have been, according to the Custom of the *Romans*, *Publius Maro Virgilius*.

His Father was undoubtedly of low Birth and mean Circumstances, but by his Industry so much recommended himself to his Master, that he gave him his Daughter, named *Maia*, in Marriage, as a Reward of his Fidelity. Our Poet, discovering early Marks of a very fine Genius, was sent at twelve Years old to study at *Cremona*, where he continued till his seventeenth Year. He then removed to *Milan*, and from thence to *Naples*, being the Residence of several Teachers of Philosophy and polite Learning, and prosecuted his Studies with great Industry and Intenseness, carefully perusing the most elegant of the *Greek* and *Roman* Writers. But Physic and Mathematics were his favourite Sciences, and to which he principally attached himself; and to this early Tincture of Geometrical Learning were owing, that Regularity of Thought, Propriety of Expression, and Exactness of conducting all Subjects, for which he is so remarkable. He learnt the *Epicurean* Philosophy under the celebrated *Syro*, of whom *Cicero* speaks twice with the greatest Encomiums both of his Learning and Virtue.

His Acquaintance with *Varus*, his first Patron, commenced by his being Fellow-student with him
under

under this Philosopher, for whom *Virgil* seems to have had a warm Affection and Esteem.

There is an Epigram remaining, addressed to *Syro*, written with so beautiful a Simplicity that one may safely pronounce it the Work of *Virgil*; who being afraid his Father and Family would be turned out of their Estate at *Andes*, endeavoured to find a Retreat for his Parents, and cast his Eye upon a little Farm that *Syro* possessed in the Country.

Ad Villam Scironis.

Villula, quæ Scironis eras, & pauper agelle,

Verum illi domino tu quoque divitiæ;

Me tibi, & hos unà mecum, quos semper amavi,

Si quid de patriâ tristius audiero,

Commendo, in primisque patrem; tu nunc eris illi

Mantua quod fuerat, quodque Cremona prius.

After *Virgil* had compleated his Studies at *Naples*, *Donatus* affirms, that he made a Journey to *Rome*; that by his extraordinary Skill in the Diseases incident to Cattle of all Kinds, he recommended himself to *Augustus's* Master of the Horse, who procured Appointments for him in the Royal Stables; that *Augustus* having a Colt presented to him by the *Crotoniates* which promised uncommon Swiftneſs and Spirit, *Virgil* immediately pronounced, that he came from a sickly Mare, and would be good for nothing, which proved the Case; and lastly, that the Emperor hearing of his extraordinary Penetration and Discernment, sent for him privately to enquire concerning his

own Parentage, whether he was really the Son of *Octavius* or not. But *Ruæus* and the most judicious Critics have rejected and refuted these Stories as highly fabulous, improbable, and impertinent; and are of Opinion that he did not appear at *Rome*, and was not known to *Augustus* till long afterwards. Perhaps 'tis safest to steer betwixt these two opposite Opinions, and to say, that our Poet might probably pay a Visit to *Rome*, and be introduced to *Augustus*, tho' not by the Methods *Donatus* has assigned. At least, *Ruæus* seems to lay too great a Stress on that Passage in the first Eclogue,

*Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibæe, putavi
Stultus ego huic nostræ similem —*

And again,

*Et quæ tanta fuit Romam tibi causa videndi?
Libertas —*

For tho' *Virgil* is said to represent himself under the Person of *Tityrus*, yet this Ignorance of the Largeness of the City might be counterfeited, and thrown in, as a natural Stroke of pastoral Simplicity, and may perhaps be justly considered as a Sentiment rather beautifully poetical than strictly true.

We cannot imagine that such an exalted Genius as *Virgil* was blest with, could lie long unactive and unexerted. We are told accordingly, that in the Warmth of early Youth, he framed a noble Design, and boldly intended to write a Poem on the Wars of *Rome*; but after some Attempts, he

was

was discouraged from proceeding, by the Roughness and Asperity of the old *Roman* Names, which horridly disgusted so delicate an Ear. That great Master of Verse (says a lively Writer) found it difficult to put such harsh Words, as *Vibius Caudex*, *Tanaquil*, *Lucumo*, or *Decius Mus* into his Poetry. Some of the Names of Towns could absolutely find no Place in Heroic Measure. They were almost as frightful as *Boileau's Woerden*, or the hideous *Wurts*, of whose Name he so woefully complains as quite scaring his Muse.

*Des villes que tu prens les noms durs et barbares,
N'offunt de toutes partes que syllabes bizarres :
Et qui peut sans fumer aborder Woerden,
Quel vers ne tomberoit au seul nom de Hensden ?
Wurts, l'espoir du Pais, et l'Appui de ces Murs,
Wurts --- Ah quel nom, Grand Roi, quel Hector que ce
Wurts ?* Epitr. 4.

Not only so, but 'tis probable he was deterred from an undertaking above his Years, by the Reason assigned by our *English Boileau*,

When first young *Maro* sung of Kings and Wars,
Ere warning *Phæbus* touch'd his trembling Ears,
Perhaps he seem'd above the Critic's Law,
And but from Nature's Fountains scorn'd to draw;
But when t' examine every Part he came,
Nature, and *Homer*, were he found the same;
B 3 Convinc'd,

Convinc'd, amaz'd, he checks the bold Design ;
 And Rules as strict his labour'd Work confine,
 As if the *Stagyrite* o'erlook'd each Line. }

Captivated with the native Beauties of the Idylliums of *Theocritus*, and ambitious of introducing a new Species of Poetry among the *Romans*, our Poet from henceforward seems to have bent his whole Thoughts to imitate and rival the sweet *Sicilian* : And having transplanted *Pastoral* into his own Country, it flourished as successfully, as the Cherry-trees which *Lucullus* conveyed from *Pontus*.

Of these Compositions 'tis highly probable that entitled *Alexis* was his first Performance. Dr. *Martyn* thinks it might have been written in the Year of *Rome* 709, when the Poet was in his twenty-fifth Year, which was a little while before *Cæsar* was assassinated in the Year 710. *Julius Cæsar* might have read this beautiful Imitation of the *Ἐπῶν* of *Theocritus*, and been struck with Admiration of the promising Genius of its Author. Possibly the *Palæmon* was his second Performance ; it is a close Imitation of the fourth and fifth Idyllia of *Theocritus*.

May I venture to mention the *Silenus* as the next Composition in order of Time. This fine Piece of Philosophy is said to have been publicly recited on the Stage by *Cytheris*, a celebrated Comedian, remarkable for a Sweetness and Propriety of speaking, insomuch that *Catrou* imagines that Expression in the tenth Eclogue, *Quæ legat ipsa Lycoris*, does not only signify that he may write such verses as may touch or affect *Cytheris* (represented by *Lycoris*) but such as may be fit for a
 Person

Person of a marvellous Sweetness of Voice to pronounce. Let us hear *Catrou's* Opinion with Regard to this sixth Eclogue.

It is not from this Verse

Prima Syracosio dignata est ludere versû,

that I conjecture that this Eclogue ought to precede that of *Tityrus*. It is for another Reason, that I am going to produce. It is true, that the Author of the Life of *Virgil*, seems here to contradict himself. He affirms, in one Place, that the *Tityrus* was the first Eclogue which the Poet composed. "It appears, says he, that *Virgil* had "not composed any Eclogue before the *Tityrus*, "from the fourth Georgic; where he distinguishes his Bucolics by the Eclogue of *Tityrus*,"

Tityre te patulæ cecini sub tegmine fagi.

He adds besides, that the Poet spent three Years in composing his Bucolics, *Bucolica triennio perfecit*. That is, if one can believe it, that *Virgil* began his first Eclogue about the Year of Rome 713, and finished the last after the Year 715. The same Author also relates, that the *Silenus* was recited by *Cytheris*, before a full Audience, in the presence of *Cicero*. This last Fact cannot possibly be true, supposing the *Tityrus* was *Virgil's* first Performance in this Kind. *Cicero* was dead, when our Poet composed the *Tityrus*. In so manifest a Contradiction, I incline to the Side of the Story of *Cytheris*, which is attested by *Servius*. As for the Conjecture formed by the Writer of *Virgil's* Life, that the *Tityrus* was his first Eclogue, it is grounded upon a very frivolous

Argument. The Quotation from the fourth Georgic, which is the only Support of it, proves only, that *Virgil*, in the Edition of his *Bucolics*, had placed the *Tityrus* in the Front. It is said also, that *Virgil* made all his *Eclogues* in three Years. Therefore *Cicero* could not hear any one of them. But, in the Original it is *perfectit*, that is, he perfected them, he made them fit to appear. Thus this *Eclogue* might have been prior to the *Tityrus*, and *Cytheris* might have recited it in the Presence of *Cicero*.

Thus far the learned Jesuit. I beg to add a Conjecture purely my own, and submit the Decision of it entirely to the Learned. *Cicero* having heard this *Eclogue*, cried out in an Extasy of Admiration, that the Author of it was

— *Magnæ spes altera Romæ,*

the second great Hope of Rome, esteeming himself, say the Commentators, to be the first. I understand the Words in a far different Sense. The Subject of this Piece, we should remember, was an Account of the *Epicurean* Philosophy both natural and moral, which had been but lately beautifully illustrated by *Lucretius*; an Author whom *Cicero* was so eminently fond of, as to revise and publish his Work. Upon hearing therefore the beautiful Verses of *Virgil* on the same Subject, *Cicero* exclaimed to this Purpose; Behold another great Genius rising up amongst us, who will prove a second *Lucretius*. This Interpretation at once takes away the Imputation of Vanity of which *Cicero* has been accused for using these Words, making the *Spes altera* refer entirely to *Lucretius*. And besides,

besides, the Expression of *Spes* necessarily implies something *future* and *increasing*; whereas *Cicero* was at that Time arrived at a Maturity of Fame and Abilities: neither do I perceive the Propriety of the Connexion, in joining an eminent Poet with an eminent Orator. 'Tis observable that *Virgil* inserted this Hemistich afterwards in the twelfth Book of his *Æneid*, and applied the Words to *Ascanius*.

Dion Cassius relates, in his forty-seventh Book, that in the Year of *Rome* 712 the Triumvirs, *Antony*, *Octavius*, and *Lepidus*, erected and consecrated a Temple to *Julius Cæsar* in the Forum, carried about his Statue in solemn Procession with one of *Venus* in the *Circensian* Games, decreed Supplications to him on the News of any Victory, and ordered he should be worshipped as a God. In Allusion to the Death and Deification of *Cæsar*, *Virgil* composed the fifth Eclogue. He introduces two Shepherds lamenting the Death of *Daphnis*, a *Sicilian* Shepherd; he represents the Cattle abstaining from their Food for Grief, the very wild Beasts lamenting, the Fields withering, *Apollo* and *Pales* leaving the Plains, the Nymphs mourning around his Body, and *Venus* herself bitterly lamenting,

Cum complexa sui corpus miserabile nati,

Atque deos atque astra vocat crudelia mater.

For *Venus* is undoubtedly the *Mother* here mentioned, and not the City of *Rome* as *Ruæus* imagines.

This Opinion may be confirmed by a parallel Passage in the *Metamorphoses*. *Ovid* there repre-

sents *Venus* terrified at the Approach of *Cæsar's* Death ; she discovers all the Fears and Tenderneſs of a Mother ; intercedes with the Gods for his Preſervation ; ſmites her own Breſt, and endeavours to hide him in the Cloud in which ſhe had preſerved *Paris* and *Æneas* ;

————— *Quod ut aurea vidit*

Æneæ genetrix, vidit quoque triſte parari

Pontifici letum ; & conjurata arma moveri

Palluit : —————

Tum vero Cytherea manū percuffit utrāque

Pectus, & Æneaden molitur condere nube. ———

I cannot forbear obſerving the peculiar Beauty of the Epithet *miferabile* in *Virgil*. — This ſingle Word points out the mangled Body of *Julius Cæſar* in almoſt as lively a manner as *Antony's* artful Speech in *Shakeſpear* ;

Look ! in this Place ran *Caffius's* Dagger thro' —

See, what a Rent the envious *Cafca* made —

'Through this the well-beloved *Brutus* ſtabb'd ;

And as he pluckt the curſed Steel away,

Mark, how the Blood of *Cæſar* follow'd it !

Julius Cæſar, Act 3. Sc. 6.

In the latter Part of the Paſtoral, the Poet changes the Scene into Joy and Triumph, which makes a noble Contraſt to the Beginning. He repreſents *Daphnis* admitted into Heaven, Pleaſure and Joy overflowing the Plains, the very Mountains breaking forth into Songs, Altars erected, and ſolemn

solemn Sacrifices performed to him as to *Ceres* and *Bacchus*. *Augustus* must have been infinitely pleased with this exquisite Piece of Flattery.

The fatal Battle at *Philippi* was fought at the latter End of the Year 712, which at once put an End to all glorious Struggles for the Liberty of the Commonwealth, the *Patriot-Murderers*, *Brutus* and *Cassius*, having resolutely slain themselves upon the Defeat of their Army, leaving *Cæsar* and *Antony* victorious. One cannot forbear wishing there had been some *Virgil* to have lamented the Death of the incomparable *Brutus*, as well as that of the Tyrant *Julius Cæsar*, who notwithstanding his many amiable and exalted Qualities, was no better than the Enslaver of his Country. After this Action the veteran Soldiers began to murmur for their Pay, and *Augustus*, to reward them, distributed amongst them the Lands of *Mantua* and *Cremona*. *Appian* relates, that when the Lands were divided among the Soldiers, great Numbers both young and old, and Women with their Children, flocked to *Rome*, and filled the Forum and Temples with bitter Lamentations, complaining they were driven from their Lands and Houses as if they had been conquered Enemies. *Virgil* was involved in this common Calamity, applied to *Varus* or to *Pollio*, or both, who warmly recommended him to *Augustus*, and procured his Patrimony for him again. Full of Gratitude to *Augustus*, he composed the *Tityrus*, introducing in it two Shepherds, one of them complaining of the Distraction of the Times, and of the Destruction the Soldiers had committed among the *Mantuan* Farmers, the other rejoicing for the Recovery

covery of his Estate, and promising to honour the Person who restored it to him as a God.

——— *Illius aram*

Sape tener nostris ab œvilibus imbuet agnus.

But our Poet's Joy was not of long Continuance ; for we are told that when he returned to take Possession of his Farm, he was violently assaulted by the Intruder, and would certainly have been killed by him, if he had not made his Escape by swimming hastily over the *Mincio*.

Upon this unexpected Disappointment, melancholy and dejected, he returned to *Rome* to renew his Petition ; and during his Journey seems to have composed the ninth Eclogue ; which appears to have been hastily made up, out of several little Fragments of Poems, and Imitations of *Theocritus* he had by him. One Stroke in it is too artful to be omitted. He advises the Shepherd to consult no more the old Constellations and Signs as they were wont to do, but to look up to a brighter Star, the *Julium Sidus*,—alluding to the famous Comet which is said to have appeared seven Days after *Julius Cæsar's* Death, and was fancied by the Vulgar to be *Cæsar's* Soul converted by *Venus* into a blazing Star. *Suetonius* speaks of it in the following manner : *In deorum numerum relatus est, non ore modo decernentium, sed et persuasione vulgi. Siquidem ludis, quos primo consecratos ei hæres Augustus edebat, stella crinita per septem dies continuos fulsit exorians circa undecimam horam. Creditumque est, animam esse Cæsar's, in cœlum recepti, & hæc de causâ simulacro ejus in vertice stella additur.*

In

In the Year of *Rome* 714, *Virgil* composed the celebrated Eclogue entitled usually, but perhaps falsely, *Pollio*, as it related to the Birth of his Son *Salonius*. But *Catrou* has plainly demonstrated that this is a gross Mistake, and that the Subject of it is the Birth of young *Marcellus*, who was afterwards adopted by *Augustus*. The Substance of his Opinion is as follows; which will give us some Insight into this intricate Affair.

Cæsar did not remain long in quiet after the compleat Victory which he obtained over *Lucius* and *Fulvia*, the Wife of *Antony*, who had rashly taken Arms against him. This turbulent Lady fled to her Husband, and incited him to make War upon *Cæsar*. *Antony* inflamed with Rage, steered his course to *Italy*; and began a most furious and dangerous War. But the News of the Death of *Fulvia*, whom he had left sick at *Sicyon*, coming opportunely, gave a favourable Opportunity of settling a Peace between these mighty Rivals. *Cocceius*, a common Friend to both, went between them, and projected a Reconciliation: The Consul *Pollio* appearing on the Part of *Antony*, and *Mæcenas* on the Part of *Cæsar*, to arbitrate the Differences between them. The Arbitrators proposed, that as *Fulvia*, the Wife of *Antony*, was just dead, and *Marcellus* also, the Husband of *Octavia*, half Sister to *Cæsar*, *Octavia* should be given in Marriage to *Antony*. This being agreed to, caused an universal Joy: and the whole Army expressed their Joy by shouting all that Day, and the following Night. *Octavia* was with Child at the Time of this Marriage. Therefore as this great Lady, who was also a Person of a most unspotted Character, was the Cement of so blessed a Peace and

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Union

Union between the two great Triumvirs, who were upon the Point of tearing the World in sunder by their Divisions, *Virgil* was not backward in testifying his Joy for so happy an Event. The *Sibilline* Oracles had foretold, that a Child was to be born about this Time, who should rule the World, and establish perpetual Peace. The Poet ingeniously supposes the Child, with which *Octavia* was then pregnant, to be the glorious Infant, under whose Rule Mankind was to be made happy; the Golden Age was to return again from Heaven; and Fraud and Violence was to be no more. This is the Subject of that Eclogue, of which the usual Title is *Pollio*. In this celebrated Poem, the Author, with great Delicacy, at the same time pays his Court to both the Chiefs, to his Patron *Pollio*, to *Octavia*, and to the unborn Infant. It is dedicated to the great *Pollio* by Name, who was at that time Consul: And therefore we are sure of the Date of this Eclogue, as it is known that he enjoyed that high Office in the Year of *Rome* 714.

In the Year of *Rome* 715, *Pollio*, who was now in high Favour with *Augustus*, marched against, and subdued the *Parthini*. During this Expedition, *Virgil* addressed to him one of his most beautiful Eclogues, the *Pharmaceutria*, an Imitation of one with the same Title in *Theocritus*. *Catrou* groundlessly imagines *Augustus* to be the Person intended by the fine Compliment at the Beginning, because this Prince attempted to write a Drama called *Ajax*, in imitation of *Sophocles*. *Pollio's* Character was one of the most illustrious that ever adorned *Rome*; he was Master of many various Accomplishments, that seldom shine together

gether in one Person ; was a skilful and successful, General ;

Cui laurus æternos honores

Dalmatico peperit triumpho :

was an admirable Historian, Orator, and Poet ; *Horace* joins with *Virgil* in bearing Testimony to the Excellence of the Tragedies he wrote, *Od. l. Book 2.*

Paulum severæ musa tragediæ

Desit theatris ; mox ubi publicas

Res ordinaris, grande munus

Cecropio repetes cothurno.

In which Ode one cannot forbear observing that the Poet, conscious of the Dignity of the Person he was writing to, has exerted his Genius, and warmed his Fancy, and has given us some of the most spirited and sublime Images that are to be found in his Works :

Jam nunc minaci murmure cornuum

Perstringis aures ; jam litui strepunt !

Jam fulgor armorum fugaces

Terret equos equitumque vultus ;

Audire magnas jam videor duces

Non indecoro pulvere sordidos

Pollio was likewise the first who erected a public Library at *Rome*, adorned with curious Busto's of the most celebrated Writers. He had a most delicate Taste for the fine Arts, particularly Architecture and Sculpture : *Pliny* tells us, that some
of

of the capital Pieces of the most exquisite *Greecian* Artists were in his Collection ; particularly, a *Silenus*, a *Neptune*, an *Apollo*, and some *Bacchanalian Nymphs*, all by *Praxiteles* ; which are particularly mentioned in the fifth Chapter of the thirty-sixth Book of his Natural History. It was none of the smallest Honour *Virgil* met with, to be protected and esteemed by this all-accomplished Courtier.

In the last Eclogue our Author composed, he introduces his Friend *Cornelius Gallus*, lying disconsolately under a Mountain in *Arcadia*, bitterly bewailing the Inconstancy of his Mistress, and surrounded by all the rural Gods, and by *Apollo* himself, who come to sympathize with him in his Grief, and endeavour to administer Comfort to him. He had before paid *Gallus* a high Compliment in his *Silenus*, representing him wandering on the Banks of *Permessus*, and met by one of the Muses, who leads him to the *Aonian* Mountains, where the whole Assembly of Gods and Poets rises up to greet his Approach, and *Linus* gives him the Pipe of old *Hesiod* :

— *Quibus ille solebat*

Cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.

Gallus was greatly beloved by *Augustus*, who advanced him from a low Condition into the highest Posts. But being afterwards made Governor of *Egypt*, he fell into a debauched and luxurious Life, abused the Emperor in his Cups, and erected Statues of himself throughout the Province ; for which, and other Misdemeanors, being banished by *Augustus*, he fell upon his own Sword, in an Agony

Agony of Grief and Despair. *Donatus* relates that *Virgil* was so fond of this *Gallus*, that the fourth Georgic, from the Middle to the End, was filled with his Praises; and that he afterwards changed this Part into the Story of *Aristæus*, at the Command of *Augustus*. But *Ruæus* justly questions the Truth of this Story. He observes that the Story of *Aristæus* is so well connected with the Culture of the Bees, that it does not seem to have been stuck in, but to rise naturally from the Subject, and to have been a first Thought; that it is not probable, that *Virgil* would bestow so large a Part of his Work in the Praise of *Gallus*, when he had given but a few Lines to *Mæcenas* himself, to whom he dedicated the whole Poem: and lastly, that *Augustus* himself, according to *Suetonius*, lamented the Death of *Gallus*; and therefore cannot be thought so injurious to his Memory, as to envy him some empty Praise.

Thus we see *Virgil* employed the very earliest Efforts of his Muse, at a Time, in other Poets,

When pure Description holds the Place of Sense,

to useful and prudent Purposes, to conciliate the Countenance of the Great, to relieve the Distresses of himself and his Family, to commemorate his Benefactors, to gain the Favour and Friendship of those by whom it was Honour and Happiness to be beloved.

And now being in his 34th Year, he retired to a delightful and convenient Privacy at *Naples*, and laid the Plan of his inimitable Georgics: which he undertook, at the earnest Entreaties of that wise and able Minister, *Mæcenas*: not to rival and

and excel *Hesiod*, as he had lately done *Theocritus*, but on a noble political Motive, and to promote the Welfare of his Country. Great was the Desolation occasioned by the Continuance and Cruelty of the Civil Wars: *Italy* was almost depopulated; the Lands were uncultivated and unstocked; a Famine and Insurrection ensued; *Augustus* himself hardly escaped being stoned by the enraged Populace, who attributed this Calamity to his Ambition. This best and wisest Minister therefore, *Mæcenas*, resolved if possible to revive the decayed Spirit of Husbandry; to introduce a Taste for Cultivation; to make rural Improvements a fashionable Amusement of the Great. What Method so likely to effect this, as to recommend Agriculture with all the insinuating Charms of Poetry? *Virgil* fully answered the Expectations of his polite Patron; for the *Georgics* contain all those masterly Beauties that might be expected from an exalted Genius, whose Judgment and Imagination were in full Vigour and Maturity, and who had Leisure to give the last Polish and Perfection to his incomparable Workmanship.

As to *Mæcenas* his Character, tho' a bad Writer himself, fond of far-fetch'd Metaphors and an affected Stile, yet was he indisputably the kindest Patron the Muses ever found, in any Age or Country. *Paterculus* has given us a Portrait of him, painted with his usual Elegance and Expressiveness. *Urbis custodiis præpositus C. Mæcenas, equestri sed splendido genere natus: vir, ubi res vigiliam exigeret, sanè exsomnia, providens atque agendi sciens; simul verò aliquid ex negotio remitti posset, otio ac mollitiis pænè ultrà sceminam fluens: non minus Agrippa Cæsari carus, sed minùs honoratus; quippe*
vixit

vixit angusto clavo pænè contentus ; nec minora consequi potuit, sed non tam concupivit. Even the admired *Augustus* was deeply indebted to this Favourite, for guiding his Taste and forming his Manners. 'Twas he who introduced the Poets to his Court ; inspired him with a Relish for polite Learning ; convinced him of the Importance of having his Character handed down to Posterity in an amiable Light by the best Writers of his Age, and of having his Statue made by none but a *Lyfippus*. That the Emperor wanted such a Master to soften and polish his Temper and Behaviour, is sufficiently testified by *Suetonius* and other Authors, who tell us of his natural Love of amphitheatrical Spectacles, and other barbarous Entertainments, little accommodated to the Interest of the Muses. *Horace*, in his artful and concealed manner, frequently glances at this, in many Passages of the celebrated Epistle in his second Book. And *Dion Cassius* in particular relates the frank Treatment which this Prince received from his Friend *Mæcenas* ; who was forced to draw him from his bloody Tribunal and murderous Delight, with the Reproach of

Surge vero tandem, carnifex!

I cannot forbear adding a little Reflection, which may serve, among others, to convince us of the great Powerfulness of Poetry ; which is, that we should have entertained a far different Notion of *Augustus*, who was in reality a cool, a cruel and subtle Tyrant, and the Person who gave the last Wound to expiring Liberty, if *Virgil* and *Horace* had not so highly celebrated him, and gained

gained us as it were over to his Party. But perhaps the Reflection does not much Honour to these two Poets.

We are at last arrived to the Period of Time when *Virgil* began writing his *Æneid*, in the Year of *Rome* 714, when he himself was forty-five Years old. His Design in writing it has been very lately so excellently explained by a Master of Classical Learning, with equal Judgment and Taste, that it would be unjust not to quote his own Words.

“ *Virgil* is said to have begun this Poem the very Year that *Augustus* was freed from his great Rival *Antony*: the Government of the *Roman* Empire was to be wholly in him: and tho’ he chose to be called their Father; he was, in every thing but the Name, their King. This monarchical Form of Government must naturally be apt to displease the People. *Virgil* seems to have laid the Plan of his Poem to reconcile them to it. He takes Advantage of their religious Turn, and of some old Prophecies that must have been very flattering to the *Roman* People, as promising them the Empire of the whole World. He weaves this in with the most probable Account of their Origin; that of their being descended from the *Trojans*. To be a little more particular; *Virgil* in his *Æneid* shews, that *Æneas* was called into their Country by the express Order of the Gods. *N. B.* This is marked very strongly throughout all the first Part of the *Æneid*. The very Night *Troy* is burnt, *Æneas* is ordered to go and build a City in *Italy*, and to carry his Gods to it, by the Spirits of *Hector* and *Creusa*: *Cassandra* had foretold the same frequently before: *Æn.* iii. ver. 185.

Nunc

*Nunc repeto hæc generi portendere debita nostro,
Et sæpe Hesperiam, sæpe Italia regna vocare.*

Apollo orders the same ;

—— *Antiquam exquirite matrem :
Hic domus Æneæ cunctis dominabitur oris ;
Et nati natorum & qui nascentur ab illis.*
Æn. iii. ver. 98.

And his Domestic Gods, more expressly ; Æn. iii. ver. 167. The same Orders are given to Æneas whilst at *Carthage*, by the Spirit of his departed Father ; Æn. iv. ver. 351. And lastly, by the great Messenger of the Chief of all their Gods ;

*Ascanium surgentem & spes hæredis Iuli
Respice ; cui regnum Italiæ Romanaque tellus
Debentur* ——
Æn. iv. ver. 275.

He shews likewise that he was made King of it by the Will of Heaven, and by all the human Rights that could be. Viz. he has an hereditary Claim from *Dardanus* and *Jasius*, Æn. iii. ver. 168.—He has a Right by Conquest, Æn. xii. ver. 1.—He has a Right by Compact, Æn. xii. ver. 175 to 225.—And he has a Right by marrying the only Daughter of the then King, Æn. xii. ver. 937. and Æn. vii. ver. 50—52. He shews likewise that there was an uninterrupted Succession of Kings from him to *Romulus* ; that
his

his Heirs were to reign there for ever ; and that the *Romans* under them were to obtain the Monarchy of the World. It appears from *Virgil*, and the other *Roman* Writers, that *Julius Cæsar* was of this royal Race ; and that *Augustus* was his sole Heir. The natural Result of all this is, that the Promises made to the *Roman* People, in and through this Race, terminating in *Augustus* ; the *Romans*, if they would obey the Gods, and be Masters of the World, were to yield Obedience to the new Establishment under that Prince. As odd a Scheme as this may seem now, it is scarce so odd as that of some People among us, who persuaded themselves that an absolute Obedience was owing to our Kings, on their supposed Descent from some unknown Patriarch. And yet that had its Effect with many about a Century ago ; and seems not to have quite lost all its Influence, even in our Remembrance. However that be, I think it appears plain enough that the two great Points aimed at by *Virgil* in his *Æneid*, were to maintain their old religious Tenets ; and to support the new Form of Government, in the Family of the *Cæsars*. That Poem therefore may very well be considered as a Work merely political. If this was the Case, *Virgil* was not so highly encouraged by *Augustus* and *Mæcenæ*s for nothing. To speak a little more plainly ; he wrote in the Service of the new Usurpation on the State ; and all that can be offered in Vindication of him in this Light is, that the Usurper he wrote for was grown a tame one ; and that the Temper and Bent of their Constitution was such, that the Reins of Government must have fallen into the Hands of some one Person or another ; and might

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probably, on a new Revolution, have fallen into the Hands of some one less mild and indulgent, than *Augustus* was at the Time when *Virgil* wrote this Poem in his Service. But whatever may be said of his Reasons for writing it, the Poem itself has been highly applauded in all Ages, from its first Appearance to this Day; and tho' left unfinished by its Author, has been always reckoned as much superior to all other Epic Poems among the *Romans*, as *Homer's* is among the *Greeks*. It preserves more to us of the Religion of the *Romans*, than all the other *Latin* Poets (excepting only *Ovid*) put together: and gives us the Forms and Appearances of their Deities as strongly, as if we had so many Pictures of them preserved to us, done by some of the best Hands in the *Augustan* Age. It is remarkable that he is commended by some of the Ancients themselves, for the Strength of his Imagination, as to this Particular; tho' in general that is not his Character, so much as Exactness. He was certainly the most correct Poet, even of his Time; in which all false Thoughts and idle Ornaments in writing were discouraged: And it is as certain, that there is but little of Invention in his *Æneid*; much less, I believe, than is generally imagined. Almost all the little Facts in it are built on History: and even as to particular Lines, no one perhaps ever borrowed more from the Poets that preceded him, than he did. He goes so far back as to old *Ennius*; and often inserts whole Verses from him, and some other of their earliest Writers. The Obsolescence of their Stile did not hinder him much in this: for he was a particular Lover of their old Language; and no doubt inserted many more antiquated Words in his Poem than we can

can discover at present. Judgment is his distinguishing Character ; and his great Excellence consisted in chusing and ranging Things aright. Whatever he borrowed he had the Skill of making his own ; by weaving it so well into his Work, that it looks all of a piece : even those Parts of his Poem, where this may be most practised, resembling a fine Piece of Mosaic ; in which all the Parts, though of such different Marbles, unite together ; and the various Shades and Colours are so artfully disposed, as to melt off insensibly into one another."

Polymetis, Dial. 3. pag. 18.

An Event happened about this Time too remarkable to be omitted †. *Augustus*, either cloyed with Glory, or terrified by the Example of his Predecessor, or to gain the Credit of Moderation with the People, or possibly to feel the Pulse of his Friends, deliberated whether he should retain the sovereign Power, or restore the Commonwealth. *Agrippa*, who was a very honest Man, but whose View was of no great Extent, advised him to the latter : but *Mæcenas*, who had thoroughly studied his Master's Temper, in an eloquent Oration, gave contrary Advice. That Emperor was too politic to commit the Oversight of *Cromwell*, in a Deliberation something resembling this. *Cromwell* had always been desirous of the Power, as he was afterwards of the Title of King ; but by a too vehement Allegation of Arguments against it, he, who had outwitted every body besides, at last outwitted himself, by too deep Dissimulation : for his

† See the Author of *Virgil's Life*, prefixed to *Dryden's Translation*,

his Council, thinking to make their Court by assenting to his Judgment, voted unanimously for him against his Inclination, which surprized and troubled him to such a Degree, that as soon as he got into his Coach he fell into a Swoon. But *Cæsar* knew his People better; and his Council being thus divided, he asked *Virgil's* Advice. Thus a Poet had the Honour of determining the greatest Point that ever was in Debate, betwixt the Son-in-law, and Favourite of *Cæsar*. *Virgil* delivered his Opinion in Words to this Effect: The Change of a popular into an absolute Government, has generally been of very ill Consequence: for betwixt the Hatred of the People, and Injustice of the Prince, it of Necessity comes to pass that they live in Distrust and mutual Apprehension. But if the Commons knew a just Person, whom they entirely confided in, it would be for the Advantage of all Parties that such a one should be their Sovereign. Wherefore if you shall continue to administer Justice impartially, as hitherto you have done, your Power will prove safe to yourself, and beneficial to Mankind. This excellent Sentence, which seems taken out of *Plato*, (with whose Writings the Grammarians were not much acquainted, and therefore cannot reasonably be suspected of Forgery in this Matter) contains the true State of Affairs at that Time: for the Commonwealth Maxims were now no longer practicable; the *Romans* had only the Laughtiness of the old Commonwealth left, without one of its Virtues. And this Sentence we find, almost in the same Words, in the first Book of the *Æneis*, which at this Time he was writing; and one might wonder that none of the

Commentators have taken Notice of it. He compares a Tempest to a popular Insurrection, as *Cicero* had compared a Sedition to a Storm a little before.

*Ac veluti magno in populo cum saepe coorta est
Seditio, sævitque animis ignobile vulgus,
Jamque faces, ac saxa volant, furor arma ministrat :
Tum pietate gravem, & meritis si forte virum quem
Conspexere, silent, erectisque auribus adstant :
Ille regit dictis animos, & pectora mulcet.*

Augustus was eagerly desirous to peruse the Poem as far as it had been carried ; he entreated *Virgil* to communicate it to him by several Letters in the warmest Manner. *Macrobius* in the first Book of his *Saturnalia*, has preserved to us one of *Virgil's* Answers to the Emperor ; *Ego verò frequentius a te litteras accipio—De Æneâ quidem meo, si mehercule jam dignum auribus haberem tuis, libenter mitterem. Sed tanta inchoata res est, ut pæne vitio mentis tantum opus ingressus mihi videor ; cum præsertim ut scis, alia quoque studia ad id opus, multoque potiora impartiar.*

Prevailed on at last by these Importunities, *Virgil* recited (and 'tis remarkable that he read his Verses with a wonderful Sweetness and Propriety) the sixth Book to *Augustus* ; and his Sister *Octavia*, who had just lost her Son *Marcellus*, the Darling of *Rome*, and the adopted Son of *Augustus*, would needs be one of the Audience to alleviate and divert her Sorrow. Let us indulge a Thought that is naturally pleasing, for a Moment ! *Virgil*, reading the finest Part of the *Æneid* to the Lord of the whole

whole Earth, attended by his Sister, and perhaps *Mæcenas*, *Horace*, and other Favourites ! He had artfully inserted that beautiful Lamentation for the Death of young *Marcellus*, beginning with,

O nate ingentem luctum ne quære tuorum——

but suppressed his Name till he came to the Line,

Tu Marcellus eris ;————

upon hearing which *Octavia* could bear no more, but, suddenly struck with Surprize and Sorrow, fainted away. When she recovered, she made the Poet a Present of ten Sesterces for every Line, which amounted in the whole to above two hundred thousand Pounds Sterling. A Reward equal to *Octavia*'s Generosity, and not above *Virgil*'s Merit !

The *Æneid* being brought to Conclusion, but not to the Perfection our Author intended to give it ; he resolved to travel into *Greece* to correct and to polish it at Leisure. It was on his undertaking this Voyage, that *Horace* addressed to him that affectionate Ode ;

*Sic te Diva potens Cypri,
Sic Fratres Helenæ, lucida sidera,
Ventorumque regat pater,
Obstrictis aliis præter Iapyga,
Navis, quæ tibi creditum
Debes Virgilium, finibus Atticis,
Reddas incolumem precor,
Et serves animæ dimidium meæ.*

It was during his Stay in Greece, that, in all Probability, he added that fine Introduction to his third Georgic, one of the sublimest Passages in all his Works; the Numbers also are particularly majestic;

*Et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam
Propter aquam———
In medio mihi Cæsar erit, templumque tenebit.
Illi victor ego, & Tyrio conspectus in ostro,
Centum quadrijugos agitato ad flumina currus——
In foribus pugnam ex auro solidoque elephanto,
Gangaridum faciem, victorisque arma Quirini :——
Addam urbes Asiæ domitas, pulsumque Niphatem;
Fidentemque fugâ Parthum, versisque sagittis :——
Stabunt & Parii lapides, spirantia signa,
Assaraci proles, demissæque ob Jove gentis
Nomina, Trosq; parens, and Trojæ Cynthius auctor.*

This Passage contains a magnificent Allegory, in which the Poet intimates, that when he returns from Greece he would perfect and publish his Æneid: for this is the superb Temple he intends to erect in Honour of *Augustus*,

———*Monumentum ære perennius,
Regalique situ pyramidum altius.*

HOR.

The Emperor was the chief Divinity of the Temple; his Ancestors were all to have their Statues erected in it, (that is) were to be the principal Actors in the Æneid; and his Victories, like Basso Relievos,

Relievos, were to adorn the glorious Work. CATROU was the first who hit of this Interpretation, which adds an infinite Beauty to the Passage.

Nature seems to have thought, that for one Person to have produced two perfect Poems, would have been too great a Portion of Fame and Felicity for Humanity to enjoy. *Augustus*, returning victorious from the East, met with *Virgil* at *Athens*, who thought himself obliged to wait upon the Emperor back to *Italy*. But he was suddenly seized with a fatal Distemper, which, being increased by the Agitation of the Vessel, he had scarce Time to land at *Brundisium*, where he died on the twenty-second Day of *September*, in the fifty-second Year of his Age. What can give one so high an Opinion, both of his Modesty and Genius, as his earnestly requesting on his Death-bed, that his *Æneid* might be burnt, because it had not received his last Corrections and Improvements! which, to speak the Truth, the last six Books apparently want. But Mr. *Upton* is of Opinion, that he ordered his Divine Work to be destroyed, not because it wanted Perfection as an Epic Poem, but because it flattered the Subverter of the Constitution.

Tully says somewhat severely, *Adbuc neminem cognovi poetam, qui sibi non optimus videretur*. *Tuscul.* lib. 1. I never yet knew any Poet, who did not think himself the best of his Profession. This Sarcastm can be applicable to none but those trifling Wits, who owe their Complacency to their Indelicacy and Insensibility. Larger Souls are not so easily self-satisfied. *Raphaël* frequently declared, that in none of his Performances he had ever expressed his Notion of a perfect Beauty. And *Virgil's* Behaviour

rather puts one in mind of what the same *Tully* says elsewhere, that in none of his Works or Oration, he was able to come up to that high Idea of Eloquence he had conceived in his Mind. *Augustus* interposed, and would not suffer a Poem that was to consecrate his Name to Immortality, to be destroyed; it was then bequeathed to *Varius* and *Tucca*, with a strict Charge that they should make no Additions; which they so exactly observed, as not to fill up even the Hemistichs which were left imperfect. He died with such Steadiness and Tranquillity, as to be able to dictate his own Epitaph in the following Words,

*Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc
Parthenope; cecini Pasqua, Rura, Duces.*

His Bones were carried to *Naples*, according to his earnest Request, and a Monument was erected at a small Distance from the City.

He was of a swarthy Complexion, tall of Stature like his own *Museus*; of a sickly and delicate Constitution, afflicted with frequent Head-achs, Coughs, and Spittings of Blood; very temperate and abstemious in his Diet, very regular, sober and chaste in his Morals. 'Tis a false Opinion that he was slovenly and ungraceful in his Habit and Person†. He was so bashful, that he frequently

† See the following Passage in *Polymetis*, Dial. 21. pag. 325.

It seems to have been a vulgar Opinion among the Moderns, (at least, among the modern Commentators) that *Virgil* was a rough-looking, slovenly Man. T

quently ran into the Shops to prevent being gazed at in the Streets of *Rome* ; yet so honoured by the
Romans,

overturn this Opinion, I should not alledge *Ursini's* Gem, which has so often been called a Head of *Virgil* : both because there is a great deal of Reason to think, that it is falsely attributed to him ; and because we have Pictures of *Virgil* drawn at full Length, and much less to be disputed. What I mean are two Pictures, placed before two of his Eclogues, in one of those old Manuscripts of his Works, in the *Vatican* Library. You see him there represented with a sweet, modest Countenance, and dressed particularly neat. These Pictures, if you will allow of their Authority, (and I know of no other that can pretend to near so good an one) may serve perhaps to give us the true Sense of an Expression in *Statius*, and to save a Passage in *Horace* from the Misrepresentations of his Commentators. *Statius*, in speaking of *Virgil*, applies the Epithet of *torvus* to him ; whence some have been apt to imagine, that *Virgil* had a stern or sour Look. But if one ought to trust more to this Picture than to the Commentators, we should perhaps understand that Expression of his Writings rather than of his Personage, with which it will by no Means agree : whereas if it be applied to his Works, it may signify the Dignity and Majesty of them, which will agree with the Context, and the Occasion on which *Statius* uses that Expression, as much as in the other Expression it would be foreign to both. • The Passage I had in my Eye from *Horace*, is where that Poet is speaking of a Man who had some little Faults, mixed with more material Excellencies, which might well enough conceal them, at least to every good-natured Observer. The Faults or Defects he mentions are, that he was a little too passionate, somewhat ungenteel in his Conversation, and ill-dressed. Here, say the Commentators, one sees an Instance of the sly Way that *Ho-*

Romans, that coming once into the Theatre, the whole Audience rose out of Respect to him. His Voice was musical, and his Elocution marvelously proper, and pathetic. He was of a thoughtful and melancholy Temper, spoke little, and loved Retirement and Contemplation, and was an Enemy to those talkative Impertinents, from which no Court (not even that of *Augustus*) could be free. He had a Heart full of Tenderness and Sensibility, and formed for all the delicate Feelings of Love and Friendship. His Fortune was not only easy, but affluent: he had a delightful Villa in *Sicily*, and a fine House and well-furnished Library near *Mæcenas* his Gardens on the *Esquiline* Hill at *Rome*.

But ah ! *Mæcenas* is yclad in Clay,
And great *Augustus* long ago is dead,
And all the Worthies ligger wrapt in Lead,
That Matter made for Poets on to play :

says an exquisite Poet, who wanted such Encouragement as *Virgil* met with ; and who adds, in a noble Strain, that, if he had been encouraged,

race had of touching on the Faults of his best Friends, even whilst he is commending them ; and the Friend here touched upon they will have to be *Virgil*. The Lines are as follows :

*Iracundior est paulo ; minus aptus acutis
Naribus horum hominum : rideri possit, eò quod
Rusticius tonsò toga defluit, & male laxus
In pede calceus hæret*

Hor. Lib. i. Sat. iii. 32.

Thou

Thou ken'st not, *Percy*, how the Rhime should rage !
 O that my Temples were distain'd with Wine !
 And girt in Girlonds of white Ivy-twine !
 How I could reare the Muse on stately Stage,
 And teach her tread aloft in Buskin fine,
 With queint *Bellona* in her Equipage !

Spenser's October.

Juvenal says finely, that we should have wanted the strongest Paintings, the noblest Strokes of Imagination in all the *Æneid*, if *Virgil* had not been blest'd with the Comforts and Conveniencies of Life.

*Magnæ mentis opus, nec de lodice parandæ
 Sollicitæ, currus & equos, faciesque decorum
 Aspicere, & qualis Rutulum confundat Erynnis.
 Num si Virgilio puer, & tolerabile desit
 Hospitium, caderent omnes ex crinibus hydri,
 Surda nihil gemeret grave buccina-----*

Sat. vii. ver. 7r.

He used to revise his Verses with a judicious Severity, to dictate a great Number of Lines in the Morning, and to spend the rest of the Day in correcting them, and reducing them to a less Number. He compared himself to a She-bear which licks her Cubs into Shape. This was also the Practice of our great *Milton*. His Behaviour was so benevolent, gentle, and inoffensive, that most of his cotemporary Poets (even the *genus irritabile vatum*) tho' they envied and maligned each other,

agreed in loving and esteeming him. Yet that Age, polite as it was, could have furnished some Heroes for a *Dunciad*, a *Bavius*, a *Mævius*, and a *Cirvilius Pictor*, who joined in traducing our Poet. But as an Equivalent, *Horace* addressed two Odes to him, and frequently mentions him with particular Tendernefs and Esteem. In his entertaining Journey to *Brundusium*, whither he went to meet *Mæcenus*, *Cocceius*, *Capito Fonteius*, and other accomplished Wits, he tells us,

Plotius & Variu, Sinuessæ Virgiliusque
Occurrunt ; animæ quales neque candidiores ;
Terra tulit, neque quis me sit devinctior alter :
O qui complexus & gaudia quanta fuerunt !
Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.

Lib. i. Sat. 5.

I have often thought what a delightful Evening this Cluster of poetical Friends must have spent at *Sinuessæ* !

With Regard to the characteristical Difference between *Virgil* and *Homer*, (on which so many fruitless and furious Disputes have been raised) it may with Truth be affirmed, that the former excelled all Mankind in Judgment, and the latter in Invention. Methinks the two Poets (says Mr. *Pope*) resemble the Heroes they celebrate ; *Homer* boundless and irresistible as *Achilles*, bears all before him, and shines more and more, as the Tumult increases : *Virgil* calmly daring like *Æneas*, appears undisturbed in the Midst of the Action, disposes all about him, and conquers with Tranquillity. Or when we look on their Machines,

Homer seems like his own *Jupiter* in his Terrors, shaking *Olympus*, scattering the Lightnings, and firing the Heavens: *Virgil* like the same Power in his Benevolence, counselling with the Gods, laying Plans for Empires, and regularly ordering his whole Creation.

By Way of Conclusion to this Life, I will add some beautiful Verses, which I wonder to find omitted in all our late Editions; as their Purity and simple Elegance, may justly induce one to suppose they came from the Hand of *Virgil*.

Dedicatio Æneidos.

Ad VENEREM.

Si mihi susceptum fuerit decurrere munus,

O Venus, O sedes quæ colis Idalias !

Troius Æneas Romana per oppida digno

Jam tandem ut tecum carmine vectus eat ;

Non ego thure modo aut pactâ tua templa tabellâ

Ornabo, & puris ferta feram manibus ;

Corniger hos aries humiles & maxima taurus

Victima sacrato tinget odore focos ;

Marmoreusque tibi diversicoloribus alis

Interior picta stabit amor pharetra ;

Adsis O Cytherea ! tuus te Cæsar olympo,

Et Surrentini listoris ora vocat.

A DIS-

422 A

A
DISSERTATION,
UPON
PASTORAL POETRY.

MAN is not so depraved, but that Representations of Innocence and Tranquillity, are still delightful and pleasing to the Mind. The first Employment of our Forefathers was undoubtedly the tending of Cattle: an Employment which Princes and Patriarchs did not disdain to undertake, however opposite it may appear to the Refinements of modern Life. This Plainness and Simplicity of Manners is highly amusing and captivating to Persons uncorrupted; and, as *Shakespeare* says, unhackney'd in the Ways of Men; who love to be carried back into that Age of Quiet, of Innocence and Virtue,

What time *Dan Abraham* left the *Chaldee* Land,
And pastur'd on from verdant Stage to Stage,
Where Fields and Fountains him could best engage:
Toil was not then. Of nothing took they heed,
But with wild Beasts the *Silvan* War to wage,
And o'er vast Plains their Herds and Flocks to feed;
Blest Sons of Nature they, true golden Age indeed!

Thomson's Castle of Indolence.

The

38 *A Dissertation upon PASTORAL POETRY.*

The Love of the Country is so strong a Passion, that it can hardly be ever obliterated or overcome: tho' Business or Amusements, or criminal Pursuits, or Conveniences, or Courts, carry Men into Cities, yet they still continue fond of Fields and Forests, of Meadows and Rivulets. A very accomplish'd Courtier assures us, that the stateliest Edifices, and the finest Pieces of Architecture would lose their Beauty, if rural Objects were not interpersed among them.

*Nempe inter variâs nutritur sylva columnas,
Laudaturque domus, longos quæ prospicit agros;
Naturam expellas furcâ tamen usque recurret.*

HOR.

This is owing to the superior Power which the Works of Nature hold above those of Art, to affect and entertain the Imagination. For altho' the latter may sometimes appear very beautiful, or even wonderful, yet they can have nothing in them of that vastness and Immenfity, which afford so great an Entertainment to the Mind of the Beholder. The one may be as polite and delicate as the other; but can never appear so august and magnificent in the Design. There is something more bold and masterly, in the rough careless Strokes of Nature, than in the nicest Touches and Embellishments of Art. For this Reason is Pastoral Poetry so amusing to the Mind: In her fairy Region are found,

*Et secura quies, & nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum: hic latis otia fundis,*

Speluncæ,

*Speluncæ, vi-vique lacus, hic frigida Tempe,
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni.*

VIRG.

A true Pastoral, says Mr. *Pope*, is an Imitation of the Action of a Shepherd ; the Form of this Imitation is dramatic, or narrative, or mixed of both ; the Fable simple, the Manners not too polite, nor too rustic : the Thoughts are plain, but admit a little Quickness and Passion, yet that short and flowing. The Expression humble, yet as pure as the Language will allow ; neat, but not florid ; easy, and yet lively. In short, the Manners, Thoughts, and Expressions, are full of the greatest Simplicity in Nature. The complete Character of this Poem consists in Simplicity, Brevity, and Delicacy : the two first of which render an Eclogue natural, and the last delightful.

Many laboured and tedious Treatises both of *French* and *Italian* Critics, have been written on the Nature of this kind of Poetry ; but I have not been able to find any thing on the Subject so rational, so judicious, and yet so new, as a little Piece very lately published, by an excellent Writer of our own Country, in a Paper called the *RAMBLER*, which is therefore inserted in this Place.

IN writing or judging of Pastoral Poetry, neither the Authors or Critics of later Times seem to have paid sufficient Regard to the Originals left us by Antiquity ; but have entangled themselves with unnecessary Difficulties, and advanced Principles, which, having no Foundation

in the Nature of Things, are wholly to be rejected from a Species of Composition in which, above all others, mere Nature is to be regarded.

It is, therefore, necessary, to enquire after some more distinct and exact Idea of this kind of Writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the Pastorals of *Virgil*; from whose Opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every Advantage of Nature, and of Fortune, concurred to complete his Productions, that he was born with great Accuracy, and Severity of Judgment, enriched with all the Learning of one of the brightest Ages, and embellished with the Elegance of the *Roman Court*; that he employed his Powers rather in improving, than inventing; that, taking *Theocritus* for his Original, he found Pastoral much advanced towards Perfection, if not already perfect; and that having therefore so great a Rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon Caution.

If we search the Writings of *Virgil*, for the true Definition of a Pastoral, it will be found a *Poem in which any Action or Passion is represented by its Effects upon a Country Life*. Whatsoever, therefore, may, according to the common Course of Things, happen in the Country, may afford a Subject for a Pastoral Poet.

In this Definition, it will immediately occur, to those who are versed in the Writings of the modern Critics, that there is no Mention of the Golden Age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer Descriptions of a rural State to remote Times, nor can I perceive that any Writer has consistently preserved the *Arcadian* Manners and Sentiments. The only Reason that

I have

I have read, on which this Rule has been founded, is, that according to the Customs of modern Life, it is improbable that Shepherds should be capable of harmonious Numbers, or delicate Sentiments ; and therefore the Reader must exalt his Ideas of the Pastoral Character, by carrying his Thoughts back to the Age in which the Care of Herds and Flocks was the Employment of the wisest and greatest Men.

These Reasoners seem to have been led into their Hypothesis, by considering Pastoral, not in general, as a Representation of rural Nature, and consequently as exhibiting the Ideas and Sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the Country affords Pleasure or Employment ; but simply as a Dialogue, or Narrative of Men actually tending Sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious Offices : from whence they very readily concluded, since Characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the Sentiments must sink to the Level of the Speakers, or the Speakers must be raised to the Height of the Sentiments.

In Consequence of these original Errors, a thousand Precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and to confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary Manners of the Golden Age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in Pastoral, than Lilies and Roses, and Rocks and Streams, among which are heard the gentle Whispers of chaste Fondness, or the soft Complaints of amorous Impatience. In Pastoral, as in other Writings, Chastity of Sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and Purity of Manners to be represented ;

sented; not because the Poet is confined to the Images of the Golden Age, but because, having the Subject in his own Choice, he ought always to consult the Interest of Virtue.

Yet, these Advocates for the Golden Age lay down other Principles, not very consistent with their general Plan; for they tell us, that, to support the Character of the Shepherd, it is proper that all Refinement should be avoided, and that some slight Instances of Ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the Shepherd in *Virgil* is supposed to have forgot the Name of *Anaximander*, and in *Pope* the Term *Zodiack*, is too hard for a rustic Apprehension. But, surely, if we place our Shepherds in their primitive Condition, we may give them Learning among their other Qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to Things of later Existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great Propriety be allowed, there can be no Danger of making them speak with too much Accuracy, since they conversed with Divinities, and transmitted to succeeding Ages the Arts of Life.

Other Writers, having the mean and despicable Condition of a Shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the Language of Pastoral, by obsolete Terms and rustic Words; which they very learnedly call *Doric*, without reflecting, that they thus become Authors of a mingled Dialect, which no human Being ever could have spoken; that they may as well refine the Speech, as the Sentiments of their Personages; and that none of the Inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining Elegance of Thought with Coarseness of Diction.

Spenser

Spenser begins one of his Pastorals with studied Barbarity,

Diggon Davie, *I bid her Good-day :*
Or, Diggon her is, or I missay.

Dig. *Her was her while it was Day-light,*
But now her is a most wretched Wight.

What will the Reader imagine to be the Subject on which Speakers like these exercise their Eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*? Surely, at the same time that a Shepherd learns Theology, he may gain some Acquaintance with his native Language.

Pastoral admits of all Ranks of Persons, because Persons of all Ranks inhabit the Country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the Characters necessary to be introduced, any Elevation or Delicacy of Sentiment; those Ideas only are improper, which, not owing their Original to rural Objects, are not pastoral. Such is the Exclamation in *Virgil*,

Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cantibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum nec sanguinis, edunt.

which *Pope* endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater Impropropriety,

I know thee, Love, wild as the raging Main,
More fierce than Tygers on the *Lybian* Plain,

Thou

Thou wert from *Etna's* burning Entrails torn,
Begot in Tempests, and in Thunders born !

Sentiments like these, as they have no Ground in Nature, are indeed of little Value in any Poem, but in Pastoral they are particularly liable to Censure, because they are more proper for tragic or heroic Writings.

Pastoral being the *Representation of an Action or Passion, by its Effects upon a Country Life*, has nothing peculiar but its Confinement to rural Imagery, without which it ceases to be Pastoral. This is its true Characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any Dignity of Sentiment, or Beauty of Diction. 'The *Pollio* of *Virgil*, with all its Elevation, is a Composition truly Bucolic, though rejected by the Critics ; for all the Images are either taken from the Country, or from the Religion of the Age common to all Parts of the Empire.

The *Silenus* is indeed of a more disputable Kind, because though the Scene lies in the Country, the Song being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other Audience or Place : Neither can it well be defended as a Fiction, for the Introduction of a God seems to imply the Golden Age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent Transactions, and mentions *Gallus* the Poet's Contemporary.

It seems necessary, to the Perfection of this Poem, that the Occasion which is supposed to produce it, be at least not inconsistent with a Country Life, or less likely to interest those who have retired into Places of Solitude and Quiet, than the more busy Part of Mankind. It is therefore improper to give the Title of a Pastoral to
Verses,

Verfes, in which the Speakers, after the flight Mention of their Flocks, fall to Complaints of Errors in the Church, and Corruptions in the Government, or to Lamentations of the Death of fome illuftrious Perfon, whom when once the Poet has called a Shepherd, he has no longer any Labour upon his Hands, but can make the Clouds weep, and Lilies wither, and the Sheep hang their Heads, without Art or Learning, Genius or Study.

It is Part of *Claudian's* Character of his Ruffic, that he computes his Time not by the Succeffion of Consuls, but of Harvefts. Thofe who pafs their Days in Retreats diftant from the Theatres of Bufinefs, are always leaft likely to hurry their Imaginations with public Affairs.

The Facility of treating Actions or Events in the Pastoral Stile has incited many Writers, from whom more Judgment might have been expected, to put the Sorrow or the Joy which the Occafion required into the Mouth of *Daphne* or of *Thyrsis*; and as one Absurdity muft naturally be expected to make way for another, they have written with an utter Difregard both of Life and Nature, and filled their Productions with mythological Allufions, with incredible Fictions, and with Sentiments which neither Paffion nor Reason could have dictated, fince the Change which Religion has made in the whole System of the World.

Thus far the learned and judicious Mr. JOHNSON.

If I might now venture to fpeak of the Merits of the feveral Pastoral Writers, I would fay, that in *Theocritus* we are charmed with a certain Sweetnefs,

ness, a romantic Rusticity and Wildness, heightened by the *Doric* Dialect, that are almost imitable. 'Tis worth remarking, that he hath borrowed many beautiful Images from the most exquisite Pastoral now extant, I mean the *Song of Solomon*; which he probably had read with Pleasure in the *Greek* Translation of the Seventy Interpreters, who were his Cotemporaries in the polite Court of *Ptolomy*. Several of his Pieces indicate a Genius of a higher Class, far superior to Pastoral, and equal to the sublimest Species of Poetry: such are particularly, his Panegyric on *Ptolomy*, the Fight between *Amycus* and *Pollux*, the Epithalamium of *Helen*, the *Europa*, the young *Hercules*, the Grief of *Hercules* for *Hylas*, the Death of *Pentheus*, and the killing the *Nemean* Lion. Which of these Compositions is most spirited and exalted, 'tis impossible to determine: and I must here apply a noble Simile of his own, which he uses on a like Difficulty,

Ἰδὼν ἔς πολύδενδρον ἀνὴρ ὕλητόμος ἐλθὼν,
 Παπλίνει παρέοντο δῶδην πόθεν ἀρξέσθαι ἔργου
 Τὶ πρῶτον κατὰλεξω; ἔπει παρὰ μύεϊα εἰπῆν.

The sweet and pathetic Lamentation of *Melchus* on the Death of *Bion*, and of *Bion* on the Death of *Adonis*, are Pieces of Pastoral Grief,

— quæ Venus

Quintâ parte sui nectaris imbuit;

HOR.

and oblige us to lament the Loss of their Works with sincere Concern. We know of no other *Greek* Pastoral Writer.

Virgil

Virgil, who comes next to be considered, has excelled his Master *Theocritus* in these three Particulars; in Decency, in Delicacy, and in the Variety of his Subjects.

We have seven Eclogues remaining of *Titus Calpurnius*, a Native of *Sicily*, who flourished under the Emperor *Carus* and his Son. Some of them are prettily fancied, and conducted with Judgment, but the Stile favours of the Barbarism and corrupted Taste, that long before his Age infected the Roman Poetry.

Mantuan is full of the most absurd Allegories, and of Allusions to Christianity ridiculously mixed and blended with the Gods and Customs of the Heathens. In one of his Eclogues you have a Catalogue of all the Virgin *Mary's* Holidays; in another an Apparition of the Virgin, who promises a Shepherd, that when he shall have passed his Life in Mount *Carmel*, she will convey him to a far more delicious Place, and will make him dwell in Heaven with the *Dryades* and *Hamadryades*, a Sort of new Saints, whom we had not been accustomed to hear of as Inhabitants of Heaven.

The Piscatory Eclogues of *Sannazarius* deserve to be mentioned with Applause. I know not why the Critics have condemned him for chusing Subjects fruitful of new Imagery and Sentiments.

The *Aminta* of *Tasso*, the celebrated Pastoral Comedy of which the *Italians* boast so much, is not free from the common Vice of all their Compositions, false Thoughts, and glittering Conceits, quite contrary to Nature and Truth. *Sylvia*, seeing the Reflexion of her Face in a Fountain, and adorning herself with Flowers, tells them she does not wear them to mend her Beauty, but to lessen theirs, and disgrace

disgrace them by being placed near her brighter Charms. All Critics of a truly classical Taste, will be disgusted at such *far-fetch'd Prettinesses*. But the Pastoral Pieces of *Guarini*, of *Bonarelli*, and *Marrino*, are infinitely more unnatural and forced, crowded to the last Degree, with little Points of Wit, with Epigrammatic Turns, with affected Conceits, and with every Instance of false Glitter and Ornament, that usually dazzle and delight superficial Readers.

The Pastorals of the ingenious *Fontenelle*, are too polite and refined in their Sentiments. His Shepherds are all Courtiers ; and are better suited to the Toilettes of *Paris*, than the Forests of *Arcadia*. Instead of ridiculing *Theacritus* and *Virgil*, he had better have followed the Precepts of his judicious Countryman, the best Defender, Judge, and Imitator, of the Ancients ; who gives the following Advice to Pastoral Writers :

*Telle qu'une bergere, au plus beau jour de feste,
De superbe rubis ne charge point sa teste,
Et sans mêler à l'or l'éclat de diamans,
Cueille en un champ voisin ses plus beaux ornemens,
Telle, amiable en son air, mais humble dans son stile,
Doit éclater sans pompe une élégante Idylle ;
Son tour simple & naïf n'a rien de fastueux,
Et n'aime point l'orgueil d'un vers presomptueux :
Il fait que ce douceur flate, chatouille, éveille,
Et jamais de grands mots n'épouvante l'oreille.*

BOILEAU, l'Art Poétique, c. 2.

THE
ECLOGUES
OF
VIRGIL.

Vol. I.

D

E C L O G U E the First.

A R G U M E N T.

To reward the veteran soldiers that conquered Brutus and Cassius at the battle of Philippi, Augustus distributed amongst them the lands of Cremona and Mantua: Virgil's estate was seized among the rest, but he recovered it by the interest of Pollio, who warmly recommended him to the emperor. This eclogue was written on this occasion out of gratitude to Augustus. Some commentators, fond of allegorical interpretations, imagine that by the names of the two mistresses Amaryllis and Galatea, are meant Rome and Mantua; but this interpretation cannot justly be supported. It has been conjectured, that Virgil insinuates his old mistress Galatea was of Brutus's party and his new one Amaryllis of Octavius's; and that by changing mistresses he hints at his changing parties; and in consequence of that, at his leaving Mantua, and going to Rome.

[51]

THE
E C L O G U E S
O F
V I R G I L.

ECLOGUE the First.

T I T Y R U S.

MELIBOEUS, TITYRUS.

MELIBOEUS.

I N beechen shades, you Tit'rus, stretcht along,
Tune to the slender reed your sylvan song;
We leave our country's bounds, our much-lov'd plains,
We from our country fly, unhappy swains!
You, Tit'rus, in the groves at leisure laid, 5
Teach Amaryllis' name to every shade.

Ver. 2. *Reed.*] *Avenâ*, says the original. — The musical instruments used by shepherds were at first made of oat and wheat straw; then of reeds and hollow pipes of box; afterwards of leg bones of cranes, horns of animals, metals, &c. — Hence they are called *avena*, *stipula*, *calamus*, *arundo*, *stipula*, *buxus*, *tibia*, *cornu*, *aes*, &c.

*Et Zephyri cava per calamorum sifila primum
Agrestes docuere cava inflare cicutas :*

says Lucretius, b. 5. v. 1381. in a passage which must have been of use to Virgil in polishing the Latin versification.

TITYRUS.

O 'twas a god these blessings, swain, bestow'd,
 For still by me he shall be deem'd a god!
 For him the tend'rest of my fleecy breed
 Shall oft in solemn sacrifices bleed.
 He gave my oxen, as thou see'st, to stray,
 And me at ease my fav'rite strains to play.

10

MELIBOEUS.

Nay, mine's not envy, swain, but glad surprize;
 O'er all our fields such scenes of rapine rise!
 And lo! sad part'ner of the general care,
 Weary and faint I drive my goats afar,
 While scarcely this my leading hand sustains,
 Tir'd with the way, and recent from her pains;
 For mid' yon tangled hazles as we pass,
 On the bare flints her hapless twins she cast,
 The hopes and promise of my ruin'd fold!
 These ill's prophetic signs have oft foretold;
 Oft from yon hollow tree th' hoarse raven's croak,
 And heaven's quick lightning on my blasted oak:

15

20

7. *'Twas a god.*] This is pretty high flattery. Octavius had not yet received divine honours, which were afterwards bestowed on him: but Virgil speaks as if he were already deified. This was the language of the courtiers of that time.

Presenti tibi maturas largimur honores,

Says Horace. One cannot but recollect, on reading such sort of passages, the words of the spirited historian: *Igitur veris civitatis statū, nihil usquam prisce & integri moris: omnis exultant equalitate jussu principis asperare.* Tacitus, Annal. lib. i. c. 4.

Ecl. I. OF VIRGIL. 53

O I was blind these warnings not to see! ——— 25

But tell me, Tit'rus, who this god may be?

TITYRUS.

The city men call Rome, unskilful clown,
I thought resembled this our humble town;
Where, Meliboeus, with our fleecy care,
We shepherds to the markets oft repair. 30
So like their dams I kidlings wont to call,
So dogs with whelps compar'd, so great with small:
But she o'er other cities lifts her head,
As lofty cypresses low shrubs exceed.

MELIBOEUS.

And what to Rome could Tit'rus' steps persuade? 35

TITYRUS.

'Twas Freedom call'd; and I, tho' slow, obey'd.
She came at last, tho' late she blest my sight,
When age had silver'd o'er my beard with white;
But ne'er approach'd till my revolting breast
Had for a new exchang'd its wonted guest: 40
There Amaryllis reigns; yet sure 'tis true,
While Galatea did my soul subdue,

27. *The city.*] This manner of speaking of Rome, has the true pastoral simplicity in it.

34. *As lofty.*] Not only different in magnitude, but in kind, say the commentators.

41. *There Amaryllis reigns.*] Some fanciful critics imagine that the poet meant Rome by Amaryllis, and Mantua by Galatea. But Ruæus justly looks on these allegorical interpretations as trifles, and rejects them for the following reasons. 1. As the poet has twice mentioned Rome expressly, and by its proper name, in this eclogue, what could induce him

Careless I liv'd of freedom and of gain,
 And frequent victims thinn'd my folds in vain;
 Tho' to th' ungrateful town my cheese I sold, 45
 Yet still I bore not back th' expected gold.

MELIBOEUS.

Oft, Amaryllis, I with wonder heard
 Thy vows to heav'n in soft distress preferr'd.
 With wonder oft thy lingering fruits survey'd;
 Nor knew for whom the bending branches stay'd: 50
 'Twas Tit'rus was away—for thee detain'd
 The pines, the shrubs, the bubbling springs complain'd.

TITYRUS.

What could I do? where else expect to find
 One glimpse of freedom, or a god so kind?
 There I that youth beheld, for whom shall rise 55
 Each year my votive incense to the skies.

him to call it sometimes Rome, and sometimes Amaryllis?
 2. He distinguishes Galatea from Mantua also; when he says, that whilst he was a slave to Galatea, he had no profit from the cheeses which he made, from that unhappy city.
 3. If we admit the allegory, that verse *Mirabar quid moesta deos*, is inextricable. 4. Servius has laid it down as a rule, that we are not to understand any thing in the *Bucolics* figuratively, that is, allegorically.

RUAEUS and MARTYN.

52. *The shrubs.*] The *arbuta* were large pieces of ground planted with elms or other trees, at the distance commonly of forty feet, to leave room for corn to grow between them. These trees were pruned in such a manner, as to serve for stages to the vines, which were planted near them. The vines fastened after this manner, were called *arbutivae vites*. See the 12th chapter of Columella *de arboribus*.

'Twas there this gracious answer blest'd mine ears,
Swains feed again your herds, and yoke your steers.

MELIBOEUS.

Happy old man ! then still thy farms restor'd,
Enough for thee, shall blest thy frugal board. 60

What tho' rough stones the naked soil o'erspread,
Or marshy bulrush rear its watry head,

No foreign food thy teeming ewes shall fear,
No touch contagious spread its influence here.

Happy old man ! here mid' the custom'd streams 65

And sacred springs, you'll shun the scorching beams,

While from yon willow-fence, thy pastures' bound,

The bees that suck their flowery stores around,

Shall sweetly mingle, with the whispering boughs,

Their lulling murmurs, and invite repose : 70

While from steep rocks the pruner's song is heard ;

Nor the soft-cooing dove, thy fav'rite bird,

Mean while shall cease to breathe her melting strain,

Nor turtles from th' aerial elm to plain.

TITYRUS.

Sooner the stag in fields of air shall feed, 75

Seas leave on naked shores the scaly breed,

58. *Swains feed.*] The word *submittite* in the original may mean the breeding the cattle, as well as yoking oxen.

61. *What tho' rough stones.*] The reader of taste cannot but be pleased with this little landscape, especially as some critics think Virgil is here describing his own estate. 'Tis a mistake to imagine the spot of ground was barren, for we find it contained a vineyard and apiary, and good pasture land ; and the shepherd says he supplied Mantua with victims and cheeses.

The Parthian and the German climates change,
 This Arar drink, and that near Tigris range,
 Than e'er, by stealing time effac'd, shall part
 His much-lov'd image, from my grateful heart. 80

MELIBOEUS.

But we far hence to distant climes shall go,
 O'er Afric's burning sands, or Scythia's snow,
 Where roars Oäxis, or where seas embrace,
 Dividing from the world, the British race.
 Ah! shall I never once again behold, 85
 When many a year in tedious round has roll'd,
 My native seats? — Ah! ne'er with ravisht thought
 Gaze on my little realm, and turf-built cot?

77. *The Parthian.*] These images are not so much in character as those in the two preceding lines. They are too remote for our simple shepherd.

85. *Ah! shall I never.*] By *en* in the original, say the commentators, is meant *unquamne*, *aliquandone*, or *an unquam*. Ruæus observes that these expressions are in general only a bare and cold interrogation, but surely in this passage the poet means an interrogation joined with an eager desire; a sort of languishing in Meliboeus after the farms and fields he was obliged to leave. We find the same expression in the same sense in the eighth eclogue.

————— *En erit unquam*

Ille dies, mihi cum liceat tua dicere facta!

86. *Many a year.*] By *post aliquot aristas* in the original, is certainly meant *after some years*. It is natural for shepherds to measure the years by the harvests. *Arista* is the beard of the wheat; the Roman husbandmen sow'd only the bearded wheat.

87. *Ah! ne'er.*] These short and abrupt exclamations are very natural, and have quite a dramatic air. The image of his little farm and cottage being plunder'd, breaks in upon
 the

What! must these rising crops barbarians share?
 These well-till'd fields become the spoils of war? 90
 See to what mis'ry discord drives the swain!
 See, for what lords we spread the teeming grain!
 Now Meliboeus, now, renew your cares,
 Go, rank again your vines, and graft your pears:
 Away, my goats, once happy flocks! away! 95
 No more shall I resume the rural lay:
 No more, as in my verdant cave I lie,
 Shall I behold ye hang from rocks on high:
 No more shall tend ye, while ye round me browse
 The trefoil flow'rs, or willow's harsher boughs. 100

TITYRUS.

Yet here, this night, at least, with me reclin'd
 On the green leaves, an humble welcome find;
 Ripe apples, chesnuts soft, my fields afford,
 And cheese in plenty loads my rural board.
 And see! from village-tops the smoak ascend, 105
 And falling shades from western hills extend.

the shepherd, and quite disorders his mind. The irony in the following lines,

Infere nunc, Meliboei, pyros, &c.

strongly expresses both grief and indignation.

97. *No more, as in.*] I have seen in Italy (and on the Vatican hill near Rome, in particular) a little arch'd cave made by the shepherds of ever-greens, not high enough to stand in; there they lie at their ease to observe their flocks browsing. Is it not such a sort of cave which is meant here? *Viride* is not a proper epithet for the inside of a natural cave, especially for such rocky ones as one finds in Italy. SPENCE.

104 *Cheese.*] The Roman peasants used to carry the curd as soon as it was pressed into the towns, or else salt it for cheese against the winter.

End of the First ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the Second.

A R G U M E N T.

A shepherd despairing to gain the affections of a youth, named Alexis, is here introduced, uttering those natural and bitter complaints, that disappointed love is so apt to suggest. His fears, reproaches, jealousies, and pains, are painted in the most glowing colours. And none but persons who have gross, and sensual, and indelicate minds, can forbear agreeing with Dr. Trapp, in observing; "that there is no loose idea, nor one immodest expression in the whole piece; which means no more, than either the platonic love of the beauties, both of body and mind, or excess of friendship, or rather both. Experience gives us many instances of persons of the same sex, one of whom is beloved by the other, to an extremity of fondness, and almost dotage. I dare say no person, unless monstrously debauched beforehand, and so being a tempter to himself (which he may be in reading not only innocent but sacred things) had ever an ill thought suggested to him, by the reading of this eclogue."

TRAPP.

E C L O G U E the Second

A L E X I S.

YOUNG Corydon with hopeless love ador'd
The fair Alexis, fav'rite of his lord.

Mid' shades of thickest beech he pin'd alone,
To the wild woods and mountains made his moan,
Still day by day, in incoherent strains, 5
'Twas all he could, despairing told his pains.

Wilt thou ne'er pity me, thou cruel youth,
Unmindful of my verse, my vows, and truth?
Still, dear Alexis, from my passion fly?
Unheard and unregarded must I die? 10

Now flocks in cooling shades avoid the heats,
And the green lizard to his brake retreats,
Now Thestylis the thyme and garlick pounds,
And weary reapers leave the sultry grounds,
Thee still I follow o'er the burning plains 15
And join the shrill Cicada's plaintive strains.

Ver. 13. *Garlick pounds.*] We are told by Pliny that garlick was very much used in the country as an excellent medicine; *Allium ad multa, ruris praecipue, medicamenta prodesse creditur.* It must in Italy be a very nutritious food for husbandmen.

16. *Shrill Cicada.*] I don't know how every body almost in England came to imagine, that the *Cicada* in the Roman writers was the same with our grasshopper; for their characters are different enough to have prevented any such mistake. The
Cicada

Were it not better calmly to have borne
 Proud Amaryllis' or Menalcas' scorn?
 Tho' he was black, and thou art heav'nly fair?
 How much you trust that beauteous hue beware! 20
 The privet's silver flow'rs we still neglect,
 But dusky hyacinths with care collect.
 Thou know'st not whom thou scorn'st--what snowy kine,
 What luscious milk, what rural stores are mine!
 Mine are a thousand lambs in yonder vales, 25
 My milk in summer's drought, nor winter fails;
 Nor sweeter to his herds Amphion sung,
 While with his voice Boeotia's mountains rung;

Cicada is what the Italians now call *Cicala*, and the French *Gigale*. They make one constant uniform noise all day long in summer-time, which is extremely disagreeable and tiresome, particularly in the great heats. Their note is sharp and shrill in the beginning of the summer, but hoarse and harsh towards the latter part of it. They are supposed to feed on the morning dew, and then fix on some sunny branch of a tree, and sing all day long. It is hence that this insect is opposed to the ant in the old Æsopian fables, which is as industrious and inoffensive as the other is idle and troublesome. Virgil calls the *Cicada querulae* and *raucæ*; Martial, *argutæ* and *inhumanæ*. Their note is the more troublesome, because in the great heats they sing alone. Any one who has passed a summer in Italy, or in the south of France, will not think the epithet *inhumanæ* too severe for them. SPENCE.

18. *Amaryllis*.] Servius informs us, that the true name of Amaryllis was Leria, a beautiful girl whom Maecenas gave to Virgil, as he also did Cebes, whom the poet mentions under the person of Menalcas. Catrou thinks this story of Servius is a fiction: but adds another fiction of his own, that Rome is meant by Amaryllis.

27. *Sung*.] The ancient shepherds walked before, and called their sheep after them.

Nor am I so deform'd ! myself I view'd
 On the smooth surface of the glassy flood, 30
 By winds unmov'd, and be that image true,
 I dread not Daphnis' charms, tho' judg'd by you,
 O that you lov'd the fields and shady grots,
 To dwell with me in bowers, and lowly cots,
 To drive the kids to fold, the stags to pierce ; 35
 Then should'st thou emulate Pan's skilful verse,
 Warbling with me in woods ; 'twas mighty Pan
 To join with wax the various reeds began ;
 Pan, the great god of all our subject plains,
 Protects and loves the cattle and the swains ; 40
 Nor thou disdain, thy tender rosy lip
 Deep to indent with such a master's pipe.

29. *View'd.*] La Cerda has very fully vindicated Virgil, against those who deny the possibility of an image being reflected by the sea. When it is perfectly calm it is quite a mirror.

I don't know whether you have taken notice of a miscarriage in the most judicious of all poets. Theocritus makes Polypheme say,

Και γὰρ θὴν κδ' εἶδος ἔχω κακόν, ὥς με λεγόντι,
 Ἡ γὰρ πρὸν ἐς Ποσειδῶνα ἐσεπλεπόν· ἦν δὲ γαλανα.

Nothing could be better fancied than to make this enormous son of Neptune use the sea for his looking-glass : but is Virgil so happy when his little landman says,

*Nec sum adeo informis : nuper me in littore vidi,
 Cum placidum ventis flaret mare ? —*

His wonderful judgment for once deserted him, or he might have retained the sentiment with a slight change in the application. HURD's letter on the marks of imitation.

41. *Rosy lip.*] There is a fondness in mentioning this circumstance

To gain that art how much Amyntas try'd!
 This pipe Damoetas gave me as he dy'd ; —
 Seven joints it boasts — Be thine this gift, he said — 45
 Amyntas envious sigh'd, and hung the head —
 Besides, two dappled kids, which late I found
 Deep in a dale with dangerous rocks around,
 For thee I nurse ; with these, O come and play !
 They drain two swelling udders every day. 50
 These Thestylis hath begg'd, but begg'd in vain ;
 Now be they her's, since you my gifts disdain.
 Come, beauteous boy ! the nymphs in baskets bring
 For thee the loveliest lillies of the spring ;
 Behold for thee the neighb'ring Naiad crops 55
 The violet pale, and poppy's fragrant tops,
 Narcissus' buds she joins with sweet jonquils,
 And mingles cinnamon with daffodils ;

cumstance of his wearing his lip. — This fistula is used to this day in the Grecian Islands. The constant effect of playing on it, is making the lip thick and callous. Mr. DAWKINS assured me he saw several shepherds with such lips.

45. *Joints.*] Servius tells us, that *Cicuta* means the space between the two joints of a reed.

47. *Kids.*] These were undoubtedly wild kids, taken from their proper dam, and not kids which Corydon had lost, and now recovered again. Servius says, kids at first have white spots, which alter and lose their beauty afterwards.

53. *The nymphs in baskets bring.*] These lines are of an exquisite beauty, and contain the sweetest garland that ever was offered by a lover. He concludes this description of his presents by saying that, Alas! Alexis would not regard any of his gifts, as he was only a poor rustic, and that his rival Iolas was able to make far richer presents. At the mention of his rival's name he stops short, and cries, Fool that I am, to put Alexis in mind of him, — who will certainly prefer him

With tender hyacinths of darker dyes,
The yellow marigold diversifies.

60

Thee, with the downy quince, and chesnuts sweet,
Which once my Amaryllis lov'd, I'll greet ;
To gather plumbs of glossy hue, will toil ;
These shall be honour'd if they gain thy smile.

Ye myrtles too I'll crop and verdant bays,

65

For each, so plac'd, a richer scent conveys.

O Corydon, a rustic hind thou art !

Thy presents ne'er will touch Alexis' heart !

Give all thou canst, exhaust thy rural store,

Iolas, thy rich rival offers more ;

70

What have I spoke ? betray'd by heedless thought,

The boar into my crystal springs have brought !

him to me ! This seems to be the true meaning of *quid volui misere mihi ?* tho' several commentators give a different interpretation. The agitation and doubts of a lover's mind are finely painted in this passage and the succeeding lines. At last the shepherd seems to come to himself a little, and reflects on the bad condition of his affairs, which his passion has occasioned, *semiputata tibi*, &c.—and finally resolves to leave the obdurate Alexis, and go in search of another object.

60. *Marigold.*] Dr. Martyn has taken great pains to explain the true names of the flowers here mentioned by Virgil, and from his skill in botany one may imagine he has justly ascertained them. I follow him.

61. *Chesnuts sweet.*] There are still in Italy, garlands intermixt with fruits as well as flowers like that described by Virgil in his Eclogues. I have seen some of these carried about the streets of Florence, the Sunday before Christmas-day: They were built up in a pyramid of ever-greens, chiefly of bays, and faced with apples, grapes, and other fruits.

SPENCE.

71. *What.*] This reading is after the Vatican manuscript.

Wretch that I am ! to the tempestuous blast
O I have given my blooming flowers to waste !

Whom dost thou fly ? the gods of heav'n above, 75
And Trojan Paris deign'd in woods to rove ;
Let Pallas build, and dwell in lofty towers.
Be our delight the fields and shady bowers :
Lions the wolves, and wolves the kids pursue,
The kids sweet thyme---and I still follow you. 80
Lo ! labouring oxen spent with toil and heat,
In loosen'd traces from the plough retreat,
The sun is scarce above the mountains seen,
Lengthening the shadows o'er the dusky green ;
But still my bosom feels not evening cool, 85
Love reigns uncheck'd by time, or bounds, or rule.
What frenzy, Corydon, invades thy breast ?
'Thy elms grow wild, thy vineyard lies undrest ;
No more thy necessary labours leave,
Renew thy works, and osier-baskets weave : 90
If this Alexis treat thee with disdain,
Thoul't find another, and a kinder swain.

77. Pallas is said to be the inventor of architecture.

88. *Elms.*] The epithet *frondosa* has great propriety : for Servius says, here is a double instance of neglect ; the vines are half pruned, and the elms are suffered to make long shoots.

92. From Theocritus.

Εὐρησεὶς Γαλατῆαν ἰσως καὶ καλλίον ἄλλαν.

La Cerda has collected with much exactness, all the passages which Virgil has taken from Theocritus ; their number is indeed very great.

91. *If this Alexis.*] Even when he resolves to forget the beloved person, he fondly repeats the beloved name. TRAPP,

End of the Second ECLOGUE.

E C L O G U E the Third.

A R G U M E N T.

This eclogue contains a dispute between two shepherds, of that sort which the critics call Amœbaea, from Ἀμοιβαιος, mutual or alternate. In this way of writing the persons are represented to speak alternately, the latter always endeavouring to exceed, or at least equal, what has been said by the former, in the very same number of verses; in which, if he fails, he loses the victory. Here Menalcas and Damoetas reproach each other, and then sing for a wager, making Palaemon judge between them. Menalcas begins the contention, by casting some reflections on his rival Aegon, and his servant Damoetas. Vives, as usual, endeavours to allegorize this eclogue, and says that Virgil means himself under the fictitious name of Damoetas.

ECLOGUE the Third.

PALAEMON.

MENALCAS, DAMOETAS, PALAEMON.

MENALCAS.

ARE these, Damoetas, Meliboeus' sheep?

DAMOETAS.

No; these their master Aegon bade me keep.

MENALCAS.

Unhappy sheep! yet more unhappy swain!
 Whilst he Neaera wooes, but wooes in vain;
 And fears lest I by fairer fortune blest
 Should win precedence in the virgin's breast;
 Lo! here an hireling wastes his master's gains,
 And twice an hour of milk the cattle drains.
 How lean, too deeply drain'd, appear the dams!
 And cheated of their milk how pine the lambs!

DAMOETAS.

At least to men this scoffing language spare;
 We know that you--with whom--and when--and where:
 We know the cave---'tis well the nymphs were kind,
 Nor to the deed the leering goats were blind.

MENALCAS.

Ay, the kind nymphs, forsooth, no notice took,
 When Mycon's vine I tore with wicked hook.

Ver. 12. *We know that you.*] Virgil here imitates Theocritus (*No-vimus, &c.*) but is not so gross and indelicate as the Greek poet.

DAMOETAS.

Or rather when, yon ancient beech below,
 In spite you broke young Daphnis' darts and bow.
 O swain perverse! nay, when the boy perceiv'd
 The gift, oh! how your jealous soul was griev'd! 20
 'Twas well you found that way, or you I ween,
 Had died in very impotence of spleen.

MENALCAS.

What daring scandal must thy master prate,
 Since thou, his slave, canst talk at such a rate!
 Did not I see thee, thief, steal Damon's goat, 25
 While loud Lycisca gave the warning note?
 And when I cry'd,--- "See, where the rascal speeds;
 "Tit'rus take care"—you skulk'd behind the reeds.

DAMOETAS.

The goat was mine, and won beyond dispute;
 The lawful prize of my victorious flute. 30
 Not Damon's self the just demand denies,
 But owns he could not pay the forfeit prize.

MENALCAS.

You win a goat by music? did thy hand
 E'er join th' unequal reeds with waxen band?
 Vile dunce! whose sole ambition was to draw 35
 The mob in streets to stare at thy harsh-grating straw.

36. *To stare.*] Nothing can be so satirical as this line. All these R's (with a repetition of *st* in *stridenti* & *stipula*) could not concur without some design. *Milton* imitates this passage in his beautiful poem entitled *Lycidas*.

Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw.

DAMOETAS.

Howe'er that be, suppose we trial make?
 I to provoke you more, yon heifer stake.
 Two calves she rears, twice fills the pails a-day,
 Now for the strife 'tis your's some pledge to lay. 40

MENALCAS.

You cannot from my flock a pledge require,
 You know I have at home a peevish fire,
 A cruel step-dame too---strict watch they keep,
 And twice each day they count my goats and sheep.
 But since your proffer'd prize so much you boast, 45
 I'll stake a pledge of far superior cost.
 Two beauteous bowls of beechen wood are mine,
 The sculpture of Alcimedon divine;
 Whose easy chissel o'er the work has twin'd,
 A vine with berries of pale ivy join'd. 50

48. *Alcimedon.*] As there is no account left us of any famous artist called Alcimedon; Dr. Martyn imagines that he was a friend of our poet, who was therefore willing to transmit his name to posterity. By his name, he appears to have been a Greek. How highly the arts of painting and carving were esteemed in Greece, appears from this very remarkable passage in Pliny; speaking of Eupompus, he says, "It was enjoined by his authority, first in Sicyon, and next throughout all Greece, that *ingenuous youths* should above all things learn the art of *carving*, that is, of making designs in box; and that this art should be ranked among the first of the liberal ones. He thought the laws of honour were violated, if any but gentlemen, or at least those that were reputably born, practised this art; and made a perpetual prohibition that slaves never should be admitted to learn it. Hence it is that we see no celebrated pieces of *carving*, neither of *engraving*, or *relievo*, [*Toreutice*] done by any person in the degree of a slave."

Nat. Hist. b. 35. c. 10.

Full in the midst two comely forms appear,
Conon, with him who fram'd that wond'rous sphere,
Which points the change of seasons to the swain,
And when to plough the soil, or reap the grain.
These are my pledge ; which yet with care I keep 55
Untouch'd, and unpolluted by the lip.

DAMOETAS.

I have a pair by the same artist made,
Their handles with acanthus' leaves o'erlaid,
Where Orpheus in the midst attracts the grove—
But my first-proffer'd prize is still above 60
All we can stake ; tho' yet my cups I keep
Untouch'd, and unpolluted by the lip.

MENALCAS.

Name your own terms, nor think the field to fly,
We'll chuse, for judge, the first who passes by—
Palaemon comes—let him the cause decide ; 65
For once I'll tame an empty boaster's pride.

DAMOETAS.

I fear the threats of no vain-glorious swain,
No proud Menalcas, nor his vaunted strain.
The song, Palaemon, with attention hear,
No mean debate demands thy listening ear. 70

PALAEMON.

Begin, since on the tender turf we rest,
And fields and trees in fruitful stores are drest.
The lofty groves their verdant livery wear,
And in full beauty blooms the laughing year.

Begin Damoetas; next, Menalcas, prove
Thy skill; the Nine alternate measures love.

DAMOETAS.

Muses from mighty Jove begin the theme;
With mighty Jove all nature's regions teem:
With liberal hand he sows the plenteous plains,
Nor unpropitious hears my rural strains.

MENALCAS.

E'en me, mean shepherd, Phoebus deigns to love,
Sacred to him I rear a laurel-grove:
And still along my lavish borders rise,
His hyacinths of sweetly-blooming dies.

DAMOETAS.

At me an apple Galatea threw,
Then to the willows, wily girl, withdrew;
Yet as with hasty steps she skimm'd the green,
Wish'd, e'er she gain'd the willows, to be seen.

77. *Muses from mighty.*] Virgil seems to have laid it down as an indispensable rule to himself, in these Amœbaean verses, to make the respondent shepherd answer his opponent, in exactly the same number of lines. Either this rule was never taken notice of, by any former translator; or the extreme difficulty of observing it, hath deterred them from attempting to follow it. How I have succeeded (both in this and the seventh Eclogue) must be left to the determination of the judicious reader, who, it is hoped, will make proper allowances for such a constraint.

82. *Laurel.*] The ancient poets seem to use *laurus* indifferently for laurels, or bays: strictly speaking, *lauro*, or *lauro regio*, signifies the former in Italian, and *alloro* the latter; but their best poets use *lauro* indifferently for both.

SPENCE

MENALCAS.

But unsolicited Amyntas burns
 For me, spontaneously my love returns 90
 Unask'd the boy prevents each soft request,
 Nor by my dogs is Delia more caress'd.

DAMOETAS.

To the dear Venus of my love-sick mind,
 Her swain a welcome present has design'd.
 I mark'd the bough where two fond turtles coo'd, 95
 And her's shall be the nest, and feathery brood.

MENALCAS.

Amid the woodland wilds a tree I found,
 Its plenteous boughs with golden apples crown'd;
 Ten, all I could, to my dear youth I sent,
 And mean ten more to-morrow to present. 100

DAMOETAS.

How oft with words so musically mild,
 Has Galatea every sense beguil'd!
 Some part, at least, to heav'n, ye breezes, bear,
 Nor let such words be lost in common air.

MENALCAS.

In vain, Amyntas, you pretend in vain 105
 To love; you treat me with unkind disdain,
 If while you hold the bristly boar at bay,
 I keep the nets, nor share the dangerous day.

103. *Breezes, bear.*] This sentiment of Damoetas is beautiful and poetical to the last degree; especially, *partem aliquam*.

107. *The boar at bay.*] Orig. *Si, dum tu sectaris apros, ego*
rena

DAMOETAS.

Bid Phillis haste t' improve the genial mirth
 Of this the day that gave her shepherd birth ; 110
 And when my heifer bleeds at Ceres' feast,
 Iolas, come thyself, and be a welcome guest !

MENALCAS.

Phillis o'er every other nymph I prize,
 Oh ! how she took her leave with weeping eyes !
 And as I went, " Dear shepherd," oft she cry'd, 115
 And many a long adieu thro' the deep vales she sigh'd.

DAMOETAS.

The wolf is fatal to the folded sheep,
 With fatal force o'er trees loud tempests sweep ;
 Fatal the rushing show'rs to ripening corn ;
 To me more fatal Amaryllis' scorn ! 120

MENALCAS.

Sweet are the vernal show'rs to swelling feed ;
 The flow'ry arbut to the weanling kid :
 The tender willows to the teeming herd :
 By me o'er all Amyntas is preferr'd.

retia seruo? " What signifies your love to me, if you will
 " not let me shew mine to you by sharing your dangers?" —
 For all the danger was in hunting the wild beasts ; none in
 watching the nets.

RUAEBUS and TRAPP.

113. *Phillis o'er every other nymph.*] The original is, *et longum formose, vale — Iola!* The vocative case *Iola* does not agree with *formose*, but is to be construed at the beginning of the couplet: *O Iolas, I love Phillis above other women, for she wept when I parted from her, and cried, O fair shepherd [Menalcas] farewell, &c.*

121. *Vernal showers.*] La Cerda thinks the shepherds are equal in these couplets : but Catrou, according to custom, affirms

DAMOETAS.

Pollio approves, though rough, my rural reed ; 125
Muses, an heifer for your patron feed !

MENALCAS.

Since Pollio deigns to build the lofty strain ;
Feed him a bull that butting spurns the plain.

DAMOETAS.

Let him who loves a Pollio's sacred name
Gain what he loves, and share a Pollio's fame : 130
For him let golden streams of honey flow,
And fragrant spices breathe from every bough.

MENALCAS.

Is there a swain that hates not Bavius' lays ?
Be it his curse vile Maevius' verse to praise :
The same degree of madness might provoke 135
To milk male goats, or stubborn foxes yoke.

DAMOETAS.

Ye boys that gather flow'rs and strawberries,
Lo ! hid within the grass a serpent lies !

affirms that Menalcas has the advantage. " The images, says he, which Menalcas here presents to the mind, are more agreeable than those of his adversary. A wolf, unseasonable rains, and tempestuous winds, are the ornament of Damoetas's discourse. In that of Menalcas, we have favourable rains, and an agreeable nourishment to the flocks."

139. *Graze not.*] Catrou understands this couplet as an allegory, implying a caution to avoid being surprized by dangerous inclinations.

MENALCAS.

Graze not, my sheep, too near the faithless bank,
Scarce yet the ram has dry'd his fleeces dank. 140

DAMOETAS.

Tityrus, thy kids too near the river stray,
Myself will wash them all some fitter day.

MENALCAS.

Boys, fold your sheep, 'tis vain to press the teat,
When all the milk, as erst, is dry'd with heat.

DAMOETAS.

How lean my bull on yonder clover'd plain ! 145
Love wastes alike the cattle and the swain.

MENALCAS.

Some heavier plague has made these lambs so lean,
What magic eye my tender brood has seen !

DAMOETAS.

Tell me the place, where heaven's contracted bound
Appears to view but three short ells around ? 150
Tell this, and thou my god of verse shalt shine.

MENALCAS.

Tell this, and lovely Phillis shall be thine :

148. *What magic eye.*] The notion of an evil eye, still prevails among the ignorant vulgar. Lord Bacon speaks of the power of the glances of an envious eye. See an *account of fascination* in CHAMBERS'S *Dictionary*.

151. *Tell this.*] Catrou and Dr. Trapp are for the *well and the oven*, as the most simple and suitable to a shepherd's understanding. But Dr. Martyn proposes a new interpretation, and thinks the shepherd may mean a celestial globe or sphere.

O tell in what delightful region springs
The flow'r that bears inscrib'd the names of kings.

PALAEEMON.

Which to prefer perplexing doubts arise : 155

Neither have won, but both deserv'd the prize ;

And all deserve alike, whose song can prove,

Like yours, who much they fear'd or hop'd in love.

'Tis time to cease, my boys : the streams restrain,

Enough the floods have drench'd the thirsty plain. 160

154. *Of kings.*] The flower here meant is the hyacinth, which as it is said to spring from the blood of Ajax, was mark'd AI.

159. *The streams*] *Claudite jam rivos*, is an allegorical expression, taken from a river's refreshing the meadows, and applied to music and poetry delighting the ears, the fancy, and the judgment.

The End of the Third Eclogue.

E C L O G U E the Fourth.

A R G U M E N T.

Catrou seems to be the first commentator that has given any thing like a rational interpretation of the subject of this famous Eclogue. His words are as follows, viz. In the year of Rome 714, says he, when Asinius Pollio and Domitius Calvinus were consuls, the people of Rome compelled the triumvirs Octavian and Anthony to make a durable peace between them. It was hoped, that thereby an end would be put to the war with Sextus Pompey, who had made himself master of Sicily, and by the interruption of commerce, had caused a famine in Rome. To make this peace the more firm, they would have Anthony, whose wife Fulvia was then dead, to marry Octavian Caesar's sister Octavia, who had lately lost her husband Marcellus, and was then big with a child, of which she was delivered, after her marriage with Anthony. This child retained the name of his own father Marcellus, and as long as he lived was the delight of his uncle Octavian, and the hope of the Roman people. It is he that is the subject of this Eclogue. Virgil addresses it to Pollio, who was at that time consul, and thereby makes a compliment to Caesar, Anthony, Octavia, and Pollio, all at once. The Marcellus, whose birth is here celebrated, is the same whose death is lamented by Virgil in the sixth Aeneid. The poet borrows what was predicted by the Camaeen Sybil concerning Jesus Christ, and applies it to this child.

E C L O G U E the Fourth.

On the Birth of MARCELLUS.

To POLLIO.

GIVE me, Sicilian maids, sublimer strains,
All love not lowly shrubs and rural plains :
Or if ye chuse to sing the shady grove,
Make your theme worthy a great consul's love.

The years approach, by Sybils sage foretold, 5
Again by circling time in order roll'd !
Aetrea comes, old Saturn's holy reign,
Peace, virtue, justice, now return again !
See a new progeny from heav'n descend !
Lucina hear ! th' important birth befriend ! 10
The golden age this infant shall restore,
Thy Phoebus reigns—and vice shall be no more.
The months begin, the babe's auspicious face,
Pollio, thy glorious consulship shall grace ;
What footsteps of our ancient crimes remain 15
For ever shall be banish'd in thy reign.
He shall enjoy the life divine, and see
The gods, and heroes of eternity ;
The jarring world in lasting peace shall bind,
And with his father's virtues rule mankind. 20

For thee, O child, spontaneous earth shall pour
 Green ivy, mix'd with ev'ry choicest flow'r :
 Each field shall breathe Assyria's rich perfume,
 And sweets ambrosial round thy cradle bloom :
 With milk o'ercharg'd the goats shall homeward speed,²⁵
 And herds secure from mighty lions feed.
 The baleful asp, and speckled snake shall die,
 Nor pois'nous herb 'mid flow'rs conceal'd shall lie.
 But when his matchless father's deeds divine,
 And how in virtue's arduous paths to shine,³⁰
 Warm'd with old heroes' fame, the youth shall know,
 Then clustering grapes on forest-thorns shall glow ;

Ver. 21. *For thee, O child.*] 'Tis impossible to forbear observing the great similitude of this passage, and that famous one of Isaiah :

“ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for
 “ them : and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the
 “ rose, chap. xxxv. ver. 1. The glory of Lebanon shall
 “ come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box
 “ together, chap. xi. ver. 13. The wolf also shall dwell
 “ with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid :
 “ and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together,
 “ and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and
 “ the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together :
 “ and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the
 “ sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the
 “ weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den, chap.
 “ xi. ver. 6, 7, 8.”

How much inferior is Virgil's poetry to Isaiah's. The former has nothing comparable to these beautiful strokes ; “ that
 “ a little child shall lead the lion ;——that the very trees of
 “ the forest shall come to pay adoration.”——Virgil says only *occidet et serpens* ; Isaiah adds a circumstance inimitably picturesque, that the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp ; and that the weaned child, a little older and beginning to make use of its hands, shall put his fingers on the

Swains without culture golden harvests reap,
 And knotted oaks shall showers of honey weep.
 Yet of old crimes some footsteps shall remain, 35
 The glebe be plough'd, ships tempt the dang'rous main;
 'Round cities bulwarks rise, and massy tow'rs,
 And other Argo's bear the chosen pow'rs;
 New wars the bleeding nations shall destroy,
 And great Achilles find a second Troy. 40

Last, when he reaches manhood's prime complete,
 The sailor shall forsake the uselefs fleet;
 No freighted ship shall wander ocean 'round,
 With ev'ry fruit shall ev'ry clime be crown'd :
 No lands shall feel the rake, nor vine the hook, 45
 The swain from toil his bullocks shall unyoke :
 No wool shall glow with alien colours gay,
 The ram himself rich fleeces shall display

the adder's den. There are certain critics who would never cease to admire these circumstances and strokes of nature, if they had not the ill fortune to be placed in the Bible.

33. *Harvests.*] The ancients used to sow bearded or prickly wheat, which deterred the birds from picking the ears. The epithet *molli* may therefore imply, that the corn shall no longer stand in need of this fortification, this pallisade, this *vallum aristarum* as Cicero calls it, to defend it from injuries, but shall spring up spontaneously, and grow ripe with soft and tender beards.

38. *Argo's.*] By navigation and commerce Virgil means that avarice, and by wars, that ambition shall still subsist.

CATROU.

39. *Wars.*] A bloody war at last reduced Sextus Pompey to quit Sicily, and meet his death in Asia by Anthony. The conjuncture of affairs, the preparations made by Octavian, and above all, the dispositions of men's minds, gave room for the prediction of the poet.

CATROU.

Of native purple and unborrow'd gold,
 And sandyx cloathe with red the crowded fold.
 The sisters to their spindles said—"Succeed
 Ye happy years, for thus hath fate decreed!
 Assume thy state! thy destin'd honours prove,
 Dear to the gods! O progeny of Jove!
 Behold how tottering nature nods around,
 Earth, air, the wat'ry waste, and heav'n profound!

50

55

49. *Purple.*] Murex was a shell fish set about with spikes, from whence the Tyrian colour was obtained. *Lutum* is that herb, says Dr. Martyn, which our English writers of botany describe under the name of Luteola, wild woad, and dyer's weed. It is used in dying yellow both wool and silk.

50. *Sandyx.*] Servius and La Cerda affirm the sandyx to be an herb, which is a great mistake. Sandyx is spoken of by Pliny, as a cheap material for painting. The true sandarachia, says Dr. Martyn, which seems to be our native red arsenic, was said to come from an island in the Red Sea.

54. *O progeny of Jove.*] Would it have been proper to bestow these illustrious appellations on a son of Pollio? Surely Virgil does not here pour them forth without reason. But what young prince could at that time deserve to be called the child of the gods, and the illustrious offspring of Jupiter? Without doubt it must have been one of the family of the Caesars! And did there at that time come into the world any child of the family of the Caesars, except young Marcellus? Tiberius was not yet entered into the house of Octavian by his mother, and Drusus was not yet born.

CATROU.

55. *Tottering nature.*] What is the meaning of *nutantem*? says the learned Dr. Trapp. With, or under what does it nod or stagger? With its guilt and misery, say some, and so wants to be succoured by this new-born hero. But that to others seems not to agree with the happiness which is ascribed even to the first division, and to the beginning of this happy age. And therefore they say, it either nods, i. e. moves and shakes itself with joy and exultation; which is pretty harsh to my apprehension; or, which is not much better, inclines and tends to another, i. e. a yet more happy state; *vergentem*, say

say

At once they change——they wear a smiling face,
And all with joy th' approaching age embrace !

O that my life, my vigour may remain

To tell thy actions in heroic strain ; 60

Not Orpheus' self, not Linus should exceed

My lofty lays, or gain the poet's meed,

Tho' Phoebus, tho' Calliope inspire,

And one the mother aid, and one the fire.

Should Pan contend, Arcadia's self should own 65

That I from Pan himself had gain'd the crown.

Begin, begin, O loveliest babe below !

Thy mother by her tender smile to know !

(Ten tedious months that mother bore for thee

The sickness and the pains of pregnancy) 70

For if thy parents smile not, 'tis decreed,

No god shall grace thy board, no goddess bless thy bed.

say they, *mutantemque in meliorem statum*. After all I like the first interpretation best.——'Twas good sense to say, the world at present labours with its guilt and misery : but yet rejoices at the very near prospect of the happy change, which is in a manner begun already.

68. *Thy mother by her tender smile.*] The commentators are divided in opinion, whether he means the smile of the child, or that of the mother. I chuse the latter meaning, as it may be supported by the best reasons. See RUAÆUS, and ERYTHRAEUS.

71. *Smile not.*] Those who understand this passage of the child, strain the verb *cognoscere*, to signify that the child should own, or acknowledge his mother, by smiling on her : but I do not find any instance of its having been used in that sense.

In the next line, the making of the last syllable but one short *tulerunt*, is a poetical licence not very unusual ; thus we read *steterunt et miscuerunt*, for *steterunt et miscuerunt* ; so that

that there is no occasion to read *tulerint*, as some have done without any good authority.

72. *No god.*] The life of the gods or apotheosis (here promised by the poet) consisted of two particulars; the sitting at the table of Jupiter, and the marriage of some goddesses; therefore the threats of Virgil amount to this—You shall not enjoy the life of the gods, because neither Jupiter will admit you to his table, nor any goddesses to her bed. RUAELUS.

The End of the Fourth ECLOGUE.

E C L O G U E the Fifth.

A R G U M E N T.

The subject of the following Eclogue is great, and the poet laboured his composition accordingly; it is no less than the death of Julius Caesar, and his deification. Many reasons may be given, why by Daphnis is not meant Saloninus, the pretended son of Pollio, nor Flaccus, Virgil's brother.. This Eclogue must have greatly recommended our author to the favour of Augustus. Ruæus thinks it was written when some plays or sacrifices were celebrated in honour of Julius Caesar. The scene of it is not only beautiful in itself, but adapted to the solemnity of the subject; the shepherds sit and sing in the awful gloom of a grotto, which is overhung by wild vines.

ECLOGUE the Fifth.

DAPHNIS.

MENALCAS and MOPSUS.

MENALCAS.

SINCE thus we meet, whom different fancies lead,
 I skill'd to sing, and you to touch the reed,
 Why sit we not beneath this woven shade,
 Which the broad elm with hazles mixt hath made ?

MOPSUS.

Mine elder thou ; 'tis just that I obey
 What you propose ; whether you chuse to stay
 Beneath the covert of the branching trees,
 Which shift their shadows to th' uncertain breeze,
 Or rather in yon' cooling grot recline,
 O'erhung with clusters of the flaunting vine.

MENALCAS.

Amyntas only can with you compare :

MOPSUS.

What if to sing with Phœbus' self he dare ?

MENALCAS.

Begin thou first ; whether fair Phillis' flame,
 Or Codrus' patriot quarrel be the theme ;

Ver. 2. *Skill'd.*] *Boni discere & inflare*, is the orig. is a Grecism of which there are many in our author.

5. *Elder.*] Servius says, it may either mean, *major natu et merito*. But the context seems to favour the first.

Or skilful Alcon's praises swell thy notes :

15

Tityrus mean while shall tend thy feeding goats.

MOPSUS.

Rather I'll try those verses to repeat,

Which on a beech's verdant bark I writ :

I writ, and sung between : when these you hear,

Judge if Amyntas' strains with mine compare.

20

MENALCAS.

When the weak willow with the olive vies,

Or nard with the sweet rose's crimson dies ;

Then may Amyntas with thy matchless strain :

MOPSUS.

Enough ——— for see ! the solemn grott we gain.

Round Daphnis dead the nymphs in anguish mourn'd, 25

Witness, ye woods and streams, for ye their plaints
return'd !

While his sad mother his cold limbs embrac'd,

Heav'n and the gods accusing in her haste.

15. *Alcon—Codrus.*] Surely these subjects are not pastoral enough to be here mentioned by Menalcas.

18. *A beech's.*] *Cortice fagi.* It was the ancient custom of Italy to write on the barks of trees, as it was in Egypt to write on the *Papyrus*, a sort of rush, from which the word Paper is derived.

22.] There is no English name for *faliunca*: it is either the *nardus Celtica*, or else entirely unknown. MARTYN.

27. *His sad mother.*] Dr. Martyn with great probability observes, that by the mother is meant Venus, and confirms his opinion by an almost parallel passage in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book 15. Ovid there represents Venus to be terrified at the approach of Caesar's death, she discovers all the fears and tenderness of a mother, and considers the injury as offered to herself.

No swain then drove his cattle to the flood ;
 No horse would taste the stream, or grassy food : 30
 Thee, desert rocks, thee, vocal woods bemoan'd,
 For thee with dreadful grief, ev'n Lybian lions groan'd.
 Armenian tygers Daphnis taught to yoke,
 And whirl the car obedient to the stroke,
 To dance in frantic mood at Bacchus' feast, 35
 And shake the spear with tender foliage drest :
 As vines the trees, as grapes the vines adorn,
 Bulls grace the herds, and fields the golden corn,
 So Daphnis while he dwelt upon the plains,
 Shone with superior grace among the swains. 40
 Thee when the fates in vengeance snatch'd away,
 Pales nor Phœbus deign'd a longer stay :
 In vain we sow ; the promis'd harvests fail ;
 While wretched lolium and wild oats prevail ;
 For violet-soft, for purple daffodill, 45
 Brambles and prickly burrs the meadows fill.

29. *No cattle,—no horse.*] This circumstance is remarkable, and may allude to a strange fact that happened, according to Suetonius his account, at Julius Caesar's death : He tells us, that the horses which this emperor consecrated when he passed the Rubicon, and had been turned wild ever since, were observed to abstain from their food, *pertinacissime pabulo abstinere ubertimque flere*.

33. *Armenian tygers.*] Ruæus says, the solemnities of Bacchus were in a manner restored and celebrated by Caesar with greater magnificence than they had ever been before.

44. *Wretched lolium.*] Virgil here gives *lolium* the epithet of *infelix*. It is of a malignant nature, and is so much the more dangerous from its not being easily to be distinguished from the corn among which it usually springs up. The ancients thought it bad for the eyes: *Mirum est lolio viciatate tam vili tritico*. P. *Quid jam ?* S. *Quia luscitiosus*. P. Aedepol

With boughs the brooks o'ershade, ye rural train,
 With leaves and flowers bespread the verdant plain ;
 Daphnis these rites did for himself ordain.

With grateful hands his monument erect,
 And be the stone with this inscription deck'd ;

“ I Daphnis here repose ; fam'd to the sky,

“ Fair was my flock, but fairer far was I !”

MENALCAS.

O bard divine ! as sweet thy tuneful lay,

As slumber to tir'd swains on new-mown hay,

Or as in summer's sultry drought to taste

Cool streams that bubbling o'er the meadows haste.

Thou ev'n with Pan deserv'st an equal meed,

For skill to tune the voice or touch the reed.

Blest youth ! who now shalt share that master's fame ;

Yet will I strive th' alternate lays to frame :

Bid Daphnis' praises to the stars ascend,

For Daphnis lov'd ev'n me, his humble friend.

MOPSUS.

How can'st thou please me more?—The youth thy praise

Deserv'd, and Stimichon approves the lays.

Aedepol tu quidem caecus, non luscitiosus. Plaut. Mil. Glorios.
 Act. 2. Sc. 3.

Et careant loliis oculos vitiantibus agri.

OVID. Fast. 1. 690.

And the modern Italians have yet a worse notion of it : for they look upon it as the cause of the melancholy kind of madness ; and 'tis common with them to say of any such person, *A mangiato pane con loglio*, ‘ He has eat bread with ‘ lolium in it.’

HOLDSWORTH and SPENCE.

54 O bard divine.] The elegance and sweetness of these lines

MENALCAS.

Daphnis with wonder mounts to heav'n on high,
 Above the clouds, above the starry sky :
 Hence joy enchants the woods, and smiling plains,
 Pales and Pan, the Dryads, and the swains ;
 No more the prowling wolf the cattle fear, 70
 Nor secret toils deceive th' incautious deer ;
 The sylvan wars of cruel hunters cease,
 Daphnis the mild loves universal peace.
 The desert mountains into singing break,
 The forests and the fields in transport speak ; 75
 The rocks proclaim the new divinity !
 A god, a god ! the vocal hills reply.
 O hear thy worshippers ! four altars see,
 For Phoebus two, and Daphnis, two for thee !
 Two jars of fattest oil, each rolling year, 80
 Two bowls of frothing milk to thee I'll bear ;
 The ritual feast shall overflow with wine,
 And Chios' richest nectar shall be thine ;

lines are not to be equalled by any thing, but the answer Mopsus makes to them afterwards in line 82 of the original.

Nam neque me tantum, &c.

73. *Peace.*] This expression of *otia* seems more particularly to allude to the mercy and clemency of Caesar: virtues for which he was so much celebrated by Tully and other writers.

77. *A god, a god.*] This passage is very sublime, and bears a great resemblance to that of Isaiah (which probably Virgil might have read) "Break forth into singing ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein." And this lofty language must confirm the opinion that Julius Caesar is meant, by Daphnis.

83. *Chios.*] Arvisium was a promontory of the island Chios, now Scios, from whence the finest of the Greek wines came.

On the warm hearth in winter's chilling hour

85

We'll sacrifice; at summer in a bow'r;

Alphesiboeus tripping shall advance,

And mimic satyrs in the festal dance;

Damoetas there and skilful Aegon sing;

And constantly our off'rings will we bring,

90

Both to the nymphs when sacred rites are paid,

And when the victims round the fields are led:

While the cicada sips the dew, while thyme

The bees shall suck, while boars the mountains climb,

While fishes wanton in the wat'ry waste,

95

So long thy honour, name and praise shall last.

Those holy vows which on a solemn day,

At Bacchus' and at Ceres' shrine we pay,

Daphnis to thee shall rise each circling year:

Thou too shalt be invok'd and hear our pray'r!

100

92. *When the victims.*] This ceremony was called *Ambarvalia*. The sacred dances mentioned in the lines immediately preceding, were used by the ancients both Jews and heathens in religious ceremonies. An account of them may be seen in Dr. Delany's life of David, and in Lucian *περὶ ὀρχήσεως*.

96. *So long.*] Aeneas addresses Dido in almost the same words: but observe that all the shepherd's ideas are taken from rural objects, whereas those of Aeneas are taken from philosophy. Such propriety doth Virgil ever observe in his sentiments.

100. *Thou—hear our prayers.*] RUAEUS has well explained this passage: "He who makes a vow desires something from God, and promises something to him at the same time. If God grants his request, then he, who makes the vow, is in a manner judged, and obliged to perform his promise. Thus God is said *damnare votis* or *voti*, when he grants the request, and so obliges the person to perform what he had promised."

MOPSUS.

What thanks, what recompence can my weak lay,
 For such exalted strains as thine repay ?
 Not from fresh whispers of the southern breeze,
 Nor gentle dashings of the calmest seas,
 Nor from the murmuring rills, such joys I feel, 105
 That gliding down the pebbly vallies steal !

MENALCAS.

But first receive this slender pipe, the same
 That told poor Corydon's unpitied flame,
 Who vainly sought Alexis' heart to move :
 The same with which Damoetas fondly strove. 110

MOPSUS.

And thou, Menalcas, take this well-form'd crook,
 With polish'd joints adorn'd and brazen hook ;
 Which ev'n Antigenes could ne'er obtain
 Tho' worthy to be lov'd, a beauteous swain.

110. *The same, &c.*] 'Tis inferred from this passage that Virgil certainly means himself under the name of Menalcas ; and likewise, that by his mentioning only the subjects of the Palaemon and the Alexis, and not a syllable of the Tityrus, that all these three Eclogues were written before the Tityrus ; notwithstanding that Eclogue, usually, but erroneously, is placed first in all editions. It is not improbable, that the Alexis was published before the death of Julius Caesar, who might read and admire it.

 The End of the Fifth ECLOGUE.

E C L O G U E the Sixth.

A R G U M E N T.

This piece is perhaps, one of the most beautiful of all the ten Eclogues. Virgil addresses it to Varus his friend and fellow student under the celebrated Syro an Epicurean philosopher. Two shepherds are introduced, who seize Silenus sleeping in a grotto, and compel him, with the assistance of a water nymph, to entertain them with a song he had often promised them. The god immediately begins to give them an account of the formation of things, and lays before them the system of Epicurus's philosophy both natural and moral; which last circumstance was never thought of or understood by any one translator or commentator before Catrou. After Silenus has told them how the world was made according to the doctrine of Epicurus, his adjunct Hylam; that is, say the critics, he recounted the most famous ancient fables, and some surprizing transformations that had happened in the world. How absurd and unlike the regularity and exactness of Virgil! The meaning seems to be,—that after Silenus had done with the natural, he entered upon the moral philosophy of Epicurus: which consisted in teaching men to avoid all outrageous passions and violent perturbations of mind. This was the reason that he sung to them the immoderate grief of Hercules for the boy Hylas, the brutal lust of Pasiphaë, the vanity of the Praetides, the avarice of Atalanta, and the immoderate grief of the sisters of Phaëton. All which the Epicureans condemned as enemies to that quiet and soft repose which they esteemed the perfection of virtue and happiness.

ECLOGUE the Sixth.

SILENUS.

On the Epicurean philosophy natural and moral;

MY Muse first sported in Sicilian strains,
 Nor blush'd to dwell amid' the woods and plains;
 When chiefs and fields of fight to sing I try'd,
 Apollo whisp'ring check'd my youthful pride;
 Go, Tit'rus, go, thy flocks and fatlings feed,
 To humbler subjects suit thy rustic reed;
 Thus warn'd, O Varus, in heroic lays,
 While bards sublime resound thy martial praise,
 I meditate the rural minstrelsy;
 Apollo bids, and I will sing of thee.
 Pleas'd with the subject, with indulgent eyes
 If any read, and this, ev'n this should prize,
 Thy name shall echo thro' each hill and grove,
 And Phoebus' self the votive strains approve;
 No page so much delights the god of verse,
 As where the lines great Varus' praise rehearse.
 Stretch'd in a cavern on the mossy ground,
 Two sportive youths Silenus sleeping found,

Ver. 3. *Chiefs.*] This alludes to Virgil's attempt to write an historical poem on the actions of the Alban kings.

6. *Humbler.*] The word *deductum* in the original is a metaphor taken from wool, which by spinning is made smaller and smaller. *Tenui deducta poemata filo.* — Hor. RUABU.

With copious wine o'ercome; his flowery wreath
 Just from his temples fall'n, lay strewn beneath; 20
 His massy goblet drain'd of potent juice
 Was hanging by, worn thin with age and use;
 They bind him fast (tho' cautious and afraid)
 With manacles of his own garlands made;
 For oft the senior had deceiv'd the swains 25
 With hopes (for well he sung) of pleasing strains:
 Young Aegle too to join the frolic came,
 The loveliest Naïd of the neighb'ring stream;
 Who, as the god uplifts his drowzy eyes,
 With berries' purple juice his temples dies. 30
 Pleas'd with the fraud----" Unloose me, boys, he cry'd,
 " Enough, that by surprize I've been espy'd.
 " Attend, ye youths, and hear the promis'd lay,
 " But Aegle shall be paid a better way."
 Soon as he rais'd his voice, the list'ning fauns, 35
 And wondering beasts came dancing down the lawns;
 The hills exulted, and each rigid oak,
 High-seated on their tops, in transport shook;
 Parnassus' cliffs did ne'er so much rejoice,
 At the sweet echoes of Apollo's voice; 40
 Nor Rhodope nor Ismarus that heard
 The magic warblings of the Thracian bard.

21. *Goblet.*] Cantharus was a cup sacred to the use of Bacchus, and not used by mortals.

22.] The commentators are equally divided about the true meaning of *procul tantum*, which undoubtedly signify *near* or *just by*; *tantum procul*, is barely *at a distance*.

29.] That is, just as Silenus began to open his eyes: *videnti Sileno*.

32. *Enough.*] Servius tells us the demi-gods were visible only when they thought proper.

He sung, at universal nature's birth,
 How seeds of water, fire, and air, and earth,
 Fell thro' the void ; whence order rose, and all
 The beauties of this congregated ball :
 How the moist soil grew stiffen'd by degrees,
 And drove to destin'd bounds the narrow'd seas ;
 How Earth was seiz'd with wonder and affright,
 Struck with the new-born sun's refulgent light.
 How clouds condens'd, in liquid showers distill'd,
 Dropt fatness and refreshment on the field ;
 How first up-springs sublime each branching grove,
 While scatter'd beasts o'er pathless mountains rove.
 Next to the world's renewal turns the strain,
 To Pyrrha's fruitful stones, and Saturn's reign ;
 And bold Prometheus' theft and punishment,
 His mangled heart by angry vultures rent.

44. *How seeds of water.*] This is the system of the atomical philosophers ; tho' it is certain Epicurus was not the inventor of this doctrine, but received it from Democritus. These philosophers held, that there were two principles of all things, body, and void ; or as the moderns speak, matter, and space ; and that by a fortuitous concurrence of these atoms, or particles of matter, the universe was formed without the assistance of a directing mind.

47. *Moist.*] The earth by growing compact and solid, forced the waters to retire from it, and to form the seas. Thus the sea was separated or distinguished, which is the proper meaning of *discludere*.

MARTYN.

50. *Struck with the new-born sun's.*] This circumstance of the earth's being amazed at the first appearance of the sun, is strongly imagined ; yet has been omitted by several translators.

58. *His mangled heart by angry vultures rent.*] This tale has been prettily allegorized. It is an ingenious but cruel story which the poets have contrived to express the train of

cares

To these he adds, how blooming Hylas fell,
 Snatch'd by the Naïds of the neighb'ring well, 60
 Whom pierc'd with love, Alcides loudly mourn'd,
 And Hylas, Hylas lost, each echoing shore return'd.
 Then, he bewail'd the love-sick Cretan queen ;
 Happy for her if herds had never been ;
 Enamour'd of a bull's unspotted pride, 65
 Forsaking shame, for him she pin'd and sigh'd.
 The Proetian maids whose lowings fill'd the plain,
 Ne'er knew the guilt of thy unnat'ral pain ;
 Tho' fearful oft their necks should bear the plough,
 They felt in vain for horns their polish'd brow. 70
 Ah ! wretched queen ! while you o'er mountains rove,
 Near some dark oak regardless of your love,
 He, on soft hyacinths his side reclines,
 Or for some happier heifer fondly pines.

was brought into life by Prometheus or Foresight : The chains which fastened him to the rock, and the insatiable vulture that rends his vitals every morning.

BLACKWELL's life of Homer, page 124.

62. *And Hylas.*] Hylas the favourite of Hercules falling into a well, was said to be snatched away by the nymphs. Pasiphae the wife of Minos king of Crete, was said to have had an unnatural passion for a bull. The daughters of Proetus, king of the Argives, being struck with madness by Juno, imagined themselves to be cows.

63. *Cretan queen.*] The medals of the people of this town were marked with a cow or bull. Lord Pembroke's medals, 34, 8. Quære, whether they had any sacred cattle of that kind kept there ? or, whether the woman riding on it was not Pasiphae ? Gortyna was a city of Crete. SPENCE.

67. At this verse, *Proetides implerunt*, &c. begins the famous manuscript of Virgil in the Lorenzo library ; authorized by one of the consuls, and dated by him in the 5th century. SPENCE.

73 *Side reclines.*] In the original *fultus hyacinto*. Among the

" Dictean nymphs ! with toils your woods surround, 75
 " Search where my favourite's footsteps may be found,
 " Haply the herds my wanderer may lead,
 " To fresher grafs on rich Gortyna's mead,
 " Or far away, while I such pains endure,
 " The wanton heifers may my love allure !" 80

Next told, the nimble-footed, cruel maid,
 By the false apple's glittering shew betray'd ;
 The nymphs who their ambitious brother mourn'd,
 He next inclos'd in bark, and to tall poplars turn'd.
 How tuneful Gallus wandering, next he sings, 85
 Indulging raptures, near poetic springs,
 A muse conducted to th' Aonian seat,
 Whose whole assembly rose the guest to greet ;

the ancients every one was said to be *fultus* by whatsoever he rested upon. Thus we read *Pulvino fultus in Lucilio*. Servius. The Rumen or Paunch is the first of the four stomachs of those animals which are said to ruminate or chew the cud.

75. *Nymphs.*] In the original *claudite nymphae*. — Here Pasiphae is introduced speaking to the nymphs.

81.] Hippomanes being engaged in a race with Atalanta in order to obtain her in marriage, threw down a golden apple whenever she gained ground upon him ; which she stooping to gather up, Hippomanes had an opportunity of getting before her, and of consequence of obtaining the lovely prize. The sisters of Phaeton consumed themselves with weeping for his death, and were transformed into trees. Phaeton rashly attempting to drive the chariot of the sun would have set fire to the earth if Jupiter had not struck him down with a thunderbolt.

84. *Inclos'd.*] I have ventured to translate literally *circumdat*, because it is very lively. He did not now sing *how* they were inclosed with moss, but *he* inclosed them.

88. When Virgil himself once entered the theatre, all the spectators rose up to honour his entrance.

While hoary Linus, crown'd with parsley, spake,——
 " The pipe, the Muses' gift, O Gallus, take, 90
 " Which erst the sweet Ascrean sage they gave,
 " Who bad the wandering oaks their mountains leave;
 " Go, sing on this thy fam'd Grynæan grove,
 " So shall Apollo chief that forest love."
 Why should I tell, the maid with monsters arm'd, 95
 Whose barkings fierce the wand'ring Greeks alarm'd,
 Whose hungry dogs the shrieking sailors tore,
 And round her dungeon ting'd the sea with gore.
 Or why the Thracian tyrant's altered shape,
 And dire revenge of Philomela's rape, 100
 Who murder'd Itys' mangled body drest,
 And to his father serv'd the direful feast.
 What Phoebus sung, Eurota's banks along,
 And bade the listening laurels learn the song,
 All these Silenus chaunts; the vales reply, 105
 And bear their echoes to the distant sky;

[89. *Linus*.] Virgil has been blamed very ridiculously for not saying any thing of Homer in his sixth *Aeneid* (637. 77.) where if he had said any thing of him, he must have put him in Elysium before he was born. It seems more just to complain that he has not mentioned him in all his works. He seems to have had a fair opportunity here, and another in the fourth Eclogue (v. 55.) But have not the poets he mentions in both these places some relation to pastoral poetry? and might not the mentioning of an epic poet be improper in both? Here he names Linus only; and before, the same Linus, Erichonius, and Pan. SPENCE.

[91. *Ascrean sage*.] The *senex Ascraeus*, is Hesiod, who was of Ascra, a city in Boeotia. According to some he was a rival with Homer. He writes with great simplicity, though his description of the battle between the giants and the gods, raises to the true sublime.

Till Hesper glimmering o'er the twilight plains,
 To fold their counted sheep had warn'd the swains;
 The heav'ns delighted with the matchless lay,
 To Hesper's beams unwillingly gave way.

110

110. *Unwillingly.*] There is a peculiar beauty in that epithet *invito Olympo*. The sky was so delighted with the song of Silenus, that it was sorry and uneasy to see the evening approach.

The End of the Sixth Eclogue.

E C L O G U E the Seventh.

A R G U M E N T.

The following poetical contest betwixt Thyrsis and Corydon, related by Meliboeus, is an imitation of the fifth and eighth Idylliums of Theocritus. Some fanciful commentators imagine that under these shepherds are represented Gallus or Pollio, or Cebes and Alexander, and that Meliboeus is Virgil himself. But there are not sufficient grounds for this conjecture. This pastoral is introduced with a pretty rural adventure.

*This seventh Eclogue, as the third before, seems to be an imitation of a custom among the shepherds of old, of vying together in extempore verse. At least 'tis very like the Improvisatori at present in Italy; who flourish now perhaps more than any other poets among them, particularly in Tuscany. They are surprisingly ready in their answers (*respondere parati*) and go on octave for octave, or speech for speech alternately (*alternis dicetis amant alterna Camenae.*) In both these Eclogues the second speaker seems obliged to follow the turn of thought used by the first; as at present the second Improvisatore is obliged to follow the rhyme of the first. At Florence I have heard of their having even Improviso comedies. There were Improvisatori of this kind of old; for before Livius Andronicus endeavoured to make any thing of a regular play, *compositum temerè ac rudem alternis jaciebant*, says Livy, 7. 2. U. C. 391. They were Tuscans too who brought this method to Rome.*

SPENCE.

E C C L O G U E the Seventh.

M E L I B O E U S.

MELIBOEUS, CORYDON, THYRSIS.

MELIBOEUS.

BY chance beneath an ilex'd darksome shade
 That whisper'd with the breeze was Daphnis laid ;
 Their flocks while Corydon and Thyrsis join'd,
 These milky goats, and those the fleecy kind ;
 Both blooming youths, and both of Arcady,
 Both skill'd alike to sing and to reply.
 Thither my goat, the father of the fold,
 While close I fenc'd my myrtles from the cold,
 Rambling had stray'd ; I Daphnis sitting spy'd,
 He saw me too, and Hither haste, he cry'd,
 Safe is thy goat and kids : one idle hour,
 Come, waste with me beneath this cooling bow'r :
 Here Mincius gently winding through the meads,
 Fringes his banks with grafs and bending reeds,
 Hither thy herds at eve to drink will come,
 While from yon' sacred oak bees swarming hum.
 What could I do ? Alcippe was not near,
 Nor Phillis to the stalls my lambs to bear ;
 Great was the strife betwixt the tuneful swains,
 And bent on pleasure I forgot my gains ;

Ver. 16. Bees.] That is, *apum examina*.

20. Gains.] 'Tis difficult to make the pastoral simplicity of
 this

In sweet alternate numbers they began,
(So bade the Nine) and thus the contest ran.

CORYDON.

Give me the lays, nymphs of th' inspiring springs !
Which Codrus, rival of Apollo, sings !

But if too weak to reach his flights divine, 25
My useless pipe I'll hang on yonder pine.

THYRSIS.

Ye swains, your rising bard with ivy deck,
Till Codrus' heart malign with envy break ;
Or if pernicious praise his tongue bestow,
To guard from harms with baccar bind my brow. 30

CORYDON.

This bristly head, these branching horns I send,
Delia ! and Mycon at thy shrine shall bend ;
If still the chace with such success be crown'd,
In marble shalt thou stand, with purple buskins bound.

This introduction to the contest, agreeable to modern readers. The images are all taken from plain unadorned nature, and will not bear to be dress'd up with florid epithets and pompous language, as is the custom of our pastoral writers in painting their scenes of action.

23. *Nymphs of the spring.*] The critics are greatly divided about the situation of Libethrum (*Nymphae Libethrides*) but the learned and accurate Strabo, whose testimony is worth that of a thousand commentators, tells us, that Libethrum is the name of a cave in or near Mount Helicon, consecrated to the Muses by the Thracians.

24. *Codrus.*] Codrus, says Servius, was a cotemporary poet with Virgil, and is mentioned in the elegies of Valerius.

30. *With baccar.*] It was imagined by the ancients that this plant carried an amulet or charm against the fascination of what they call'd an evil tongue.

33. *If still the chace.*] In the original, *si proprium hoc fuerit;*

THYRSIS.

Priapus! cakes and milk alone expect, 35
 Small is the garden which you now protect!
 But if the teeming ewes increase my fold,
 Thy marble statue chang'd shall shine in polish'd gold.

CORYDON.

O Galatea! nymph than swans more bright,
 More sweet than thyme, more fair than ivy white, 40
 When pastur'd herds at evening seek the stall,
 Haste to my arms! nor scorn thy lover's call!

THYRSIS.

May I appear than wither'd weeds more vile,
 Or bitter herbage of Sardinia's isle,
 If a year's length exceeds this tedious day; 45
 Homeward ye well-fed goats (for shame) away!

fuert; i. e. says Ruæus, if you shall make it as it were my own, and perpetual. *Da propriam Thymbræ domum*, Æn. 3. What is the meaning of *hoc*? That I should make such verses as Codrus, says Servius.—But falsely.—The meaning is, As I have succeeded in hunting this boar and stag, so may this success be perpetual.

40. *Ivy white*.] More beautiful than ivy, to us may seem but an odd simile. It might sound otherwise to an Italian, whose country abounds with ever-greens; most of them of a rusty and disagreeable colour; whereas ivy is of a clean lively green. They used it of old in the most beautiful parts of their gardens: Pliny speaking of his garden, and of the Hippodrome, which seems to have been one of the prettiest things in it, says, *Platanis circuitur, illae bederâ vestiuntur; utque summae suis, ita imae alienis frondibus virent*. L. 5. Ep. 6. Horace compares young beauties to ivy, and old women to dead wither'd leaves. L. 1. Od. 25. St. ult. SPENCE.

44. *Sardinia's*.] Dioscorides says expressly, that the poisonous herb of Sardinia is a species of *βελιγαχιον*, *ranunculus* or *crowfoot*. See MARYTN.

45. *Wolves*.] Catrou gives quite a new interpretation to the word *numerus*: he says it means musical numbers.

CORYDON.

Ye mossy founts, and grafs more soft than sleep,
 Who still, with boughs o'er-hung, your coolness keep,
 Defend my fainting flocks! the heats are near,
 And bursting gems on the glad vine appear. 50

THYRSIS.

Here ever glowing hearths, embrown the posts,
 Here blazing pines expel the pinching frosts,
 Here cold and Boreas' blasts we dread no more,
 Than wolves the sheep, or torrent streams the shore.

CORYDON.

Here junipers and prickly chesnuts see, 55
 Lo! scatter'd fruits lie under every tree;
 All nature smiles; but should Alexis go
 From these blest hills, ev'n streams would cease to flow.

THYRSIS.

Parch'd are the plains, the wither'd herbage dies,
 Bacchus to hills their viny shade denies; 60
 Let Phillis come, fresh greens will deck the grove,
 In joyful showers descend prolific Jove.

47. *Ye mossy founts.*] This Amœbaean is doubtless more beautiful than the succeeding, and contains more delightful images of nature. Mr. Dryden has omitted the natural stroke of the smoky posts in the cottage.

58. *Streams would cease to flow.*] The end of this Amœbaean appears to some critics to be flat—*videas et flumina sicca*. But I am of opinion the poet design'd the line should be faint and languishing, as it were, more fully to express that mournful state of nature in his painting. Mr. Pope has imitated this and the following passage in his first pastoral.

59. *Parch'd.*] A fine contrast is observable in these two Amœbaeans. The flourishing scenes of nature are strongly set off by the fading and languishing prospect that succeeds.

CORYDON.

Alcides, poplar ; Venus, myrtle groves ;
 Bacchus, the vine ; the laurel, Phoebus loves ;
 Phillis the hazels ; while they gain her praise,
 Myrtle to them shall yield, and Phoebus' bays.

65

THYRSIS.

Loveliest in walks the pine, the ash in woods,
 Firs on the mountains, poplars in the floods ;
 Fair Lycidas, revisit oft' my field,
 Pine, poplar, fir, and ash to thee shall yield !

70

MELIBOEUS.

Thus Thyrsis strove, but vanquish'd were his strains ;
 And Corydon without a rival reigns.

63. *Alcides.*] When Hercules returned from hell, he was fabled to have crown'd his head with a chaplet of poplar leaves.

71.—*But vanquish'd were his strains.*] The victory is adjudged to Corydon, because Corydon in the first Amœbaean begins with piety to the gods ; Thyrsis with rage against his adversary : in the second, Corydon invokes Diana, a chaste goddess ; Thyrsis, an obscene deity, Priapus : in the third, Corydon addresses himself to Galatea with mildness ; Thyrsis with dire imprecations : in the rest, Corydon's subjects are generally pleasing and delightful to the imagination ; those of Thyrsis are directly contrary.

RUAËUS.

72. *And Corydon.*] The original says, *ex illo Corydon*, &c. which is an ellipsis, says Servius, and may be supplied *victor nobilis supra omnes*. Simplicius says, *ex illo tempore Corydon habetur à nobis verè Corydon* : that is, really worthy the reputation he has obtained.

The End of the Seventh ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the Eighth.

A R G U M E N T.

This is evidently an imitation of the παρακρησις of Theocritus, and is very valuable not only for its poetical beauties, but likewise for the account it preserves to us of several superstitious rites and heathen notions of enchantment. The poet seems to have had an high idea of his composition by his introducing it in so lofty a strain, quorum stupefactae carmine lynces. The critics have been very much divided whether it is inscribed to Pollio or Augustus. Catrou pleads very strongly for Augustus; but Dr. Martyn largely examines this plea, and confutes it solidly. There is doubtless a great stress to be laid on

Sola Sophocleo tua carmina digna cothurno.

For though Augustus began a tragedy on the death of Ajax, (after Sophocles) yet this piece was never published, as many fine ones of Pollio were, who is highly celebrated by Horace for his dramatic excellence. Lib. II. Od. 1. Motum ex Metello, &c. The enchantments described in this Eclogue, are finely imitated in the ARCADIA del SANNAZARO; a book to which our Sir Philip Sidney in his Arcadia is much indebted. Sannazaro has there given a loose to his fancy, and has shewn that he had a very exuberant one.—Prosa. 10.

ECLOGUE the Eighth.

PHARMACEUTRIA.

DAMON, ALPHESIBOEUS.

CHarm'd with the songs of two contending swains,
 The herds for wonder ceas'd to graze the plains,
 In deep surprize the lynxes listening stood,
 The rolling rivers stopt their headlong flood !
 O Pollio ! leading thy victorious bands,
 O'er deep Timavus' or Illyria's sands ;
 O when thy glorious deeds shall I rehearse,
 When tell the world how matchless is thy verse,
 Worthy the lofty stage of laurell'd Greece,
 Great rival of majestic Sophocles !
 With thee began my songs, with thee shall end ;
 The strains thyself commanded, O attend !
 And 'mid the laurels which thy brows entwine,
 Admit this humble ivy-wreath of mine.

Night, her unwholesome shadows scarce withdrew,
 What time the cattle love the cooling dew,
 Damon, against an olive's trunk reclin'd,
 Thus pour'd the transports of his jealous mind.

DAMON.

Bright Lucifer arise ! bring on the day,
 While I deceiv'd by Nisa pine away,

Ver. 17. *Reclin'd.*] Denoting the melancholy posture of
 the shepherd, leaning against the tree, not *incumbens baculo*
ex clivâ.

To heav'n addressing my last pray'rs and tears,
Yet which of all the gods my sorrow hears ?

Begin with me, my pipe, Maenalian strains.
Delightful Maenalus, 'mid echoing groves,
And vocal pines, still hears the shepherds' loves ; 25
The rural warblings hears of skilful Pan,
Who first to tune neglected reeds began.

Begin, &c.

Fair Nisa Mopsus weds ! O wond'rous mate,
Ye lovers ! what may we not hope from fate ? 30
Now gryphons join with mares ! another year,
With hostile dogs shall drink the timid deer :
Thy bride comes forth ! begin the festal rites !
The walnuts strew ! prepare the nuptial lights !
O envied husband, now thy bliss is nigh, 35
Behold for thee bright Hesper mounts the sky.

Begin, &c.

O Nisa I congratulate thy choice !
Me you despise, my pipe, and artless voice,

25. 'Tis very poetical to personify the mountain Maenalus, and ascribe to it a voice and the power of hearing.

34. *Nuptial lights.*] The bride used to be led home by night with lighted torches before her. Their torches were pieces of pine or unctuous wood, which were cut to a point that they might be the more easily inflamed. Plutarch says, there were *five* usually carried. MARTYN.

That *nucēs* signify *walnuts*, and have a mystical signification in the nuptial ceremonies, see MARTYN's *Georgics*, v. 187.

36. *Hesper.*] That is, night approaches.

" ——— Hesperus that led

" The starry host shone brightest, till the moon, &c.
MILTON.

My goats, my shaggy brows, my length of beard, 40
Nor think the gods your broken vows have heard.

Begin, &c.

Once with your mother to our fields you came,
For dewy apples---thence I date my flame ;
The choicest fruit I pointed to your view, 45
Tho' young my raptur'd soul was fix'd on you !
The boughs I scarce could reach with little arms,
But then, ev'n then could feel thy pow'rful charms.
O how I gaz'd in pleasing transport tost !
How glow'd my heart in sweet delusion lost ! 50

Begin, &c.

I know thee, Love ! on horrid Tmarus born,
Or from cold Rhodope's hard entrails torn,
Nurs'd in hot sands the Garamants among,
From human stock the savage never sprung. 55

Begin, &c.

40. *Length of beard.*] La Cerda is of opinion, that the meaning is, my violent love has made me neglect my person.

45. *The choicest fruit.*] The circumstances of his officiousness of pointing out the fruit, and of his being but just able to reach the branches from the ground, are natural and poetical.

Ut vidi ! ut perii ! ut me malus abstulit error !

does not excell

Ὡς ἰδὼν, ὡς ἐμαρην, ὡς ἐς βάθυν ἀλλετ' ἐρωί.

Abstulit error is not so strong as the Greek.

52. *On horrid Tmarus.*] Does not the shepherd Damon seem to be too well acquainted with the geography of distant countries ?

Relentless love the mother taught of yore,
 To bathe her hands in her own infant's gore;
 O barbarous mother thirsting to destroy!
 More cruel was the mother or the boy? 60
 Both, both, alike delighted to destroy,
 Th' unnat'ral mother and the ruthless boy.

Begin, &c.

Now hungry wolves let tim'rous lambkins chace,
 Narcissus' flowers the barren alder grace, 65
 Let blushing apples knotted oaks adorn,
 Let liquid amber drop from every thorn!
 Let owls contend with swans; our rural bard
 To Orpheus or Arion be preferr'd!
 Like Orpheus draw the listening trees along, 70
 Or like Orion charm the finny throng.

Begin, &c.

Let the sea rush o'er all, in shoreless floods!
 Take this last dying gift!---farewel, ye woods!
 Nisa adieu!---from yon impending steep, 75
 Headlong I'll plunge into the foamy deep!

Cease now, my pipe, now cease Maenalian strains.

57. *Relentless love.*] After Medea had fled with Jason, one of the Argonauts, from her father and country, he basely forsook her and married another: this so highly enraged her, that she murdered before his face the children she had by him. The most pathetic tragedy of Euripides is on this fine subject: wherein the tenderness of the mother, and the fury of the forsaken mistress, produce noble struggles of passion. I cannot forbear adding, that the celebrated lines *crudelis mater magis*, &c. contain a trifling play and jingling of words very unworthy the simplicity of Virgil's style. Dr. Trapp and Dr. Martyn are of a quite contrary opinion, and think the passage beautiful.

Thus Damon mourn'd. Ye tuneful virgins, tell
The swain's reply—Not all in all excel.

ALPHESIBORUS.

Bring water for the solemn rites design'd, 80
The altar's sides with holy fillets bind—
The strongest frankincense, rich vervain burn,
That mighty magic may to madness turn
My perjur'd love—'Tis done—and nought remains
To crown the rites but all-inchanting strains. 85

Bring Daphnis, bring him from the town, my strains.
By strains pale Cynthia from her sphere descends,
Strains chang'd to brutes Ulysses' wondering friends,
Strains in the meadow, or the secret brake,
Can the deaf adder split, and venom'd snake. 90

Bring, &c.

Lo! first I round thy waxen image twist,
And closely bind this triple-colour'd list,
And three times round the altar walk; for three
Is a dear number to dread Hecatée. 95

Bring, &c.

78. *Ye tuneful virgins.*] The poet hints that he is unable to proceed by his own strength, and begs therefore the assistance of the muses. BOSSU.

80. *Bring water.*] The water was heated in the house, and the sorceress calls to her assistant Amaryllis to bring it out to her; so there is no need to read *affer*, as some have done.

82. *The strongest.*] The ancients called the strongest sort of frankincense, *male*.

94. *For three.*] The ancients had a prodigious veneration for the number *three*, and held many ridiculous superstitions in relation to it. This number was thought the most perfect of all numbers, having regard to the beginning, middle, and end.

Haste, Amaryllis, ply thy busy hand;
 Haste, quickly, knit the consecrated band,
 And say 'tis knit at Venus' dread command;
 In three close knots the mixing colours knit,
 For ardent lovers such close bands besit.

100

Bring, &c.

As this same fire melts wax and hardens clay,
 To others deaf, let him my love repay.

Crumble the sacred cake, let wither'd bays,
 Inflam'd with liquid sulphur crackling blaze;
 As Daphnis warms my bosom with desire,
 May Daphnis burn in this consuming fire.

105

Bring, &c.

May Daphnis feel such strong, unanswer'd love,
 As the fond heifer feels, thro' copse and grove,
 Who seeks her beauteous bull, then tir'd and faint
 On the green rushy bank lies down to pant,

110

103. *As this same fire.*] There were plainly *two* figures made, one of wax, and the other of clay, the former would naturally melt, and the other harden by the fire. The notion was, that as the image consumed, so did the person it represented. Dr. Martyn observes, that in the beginning of the last century, many persons were convicted of this and other such like practices, and were executed accordingly, as it was deemed to be attempting the lives of others. King James the first was a great believer of the power of magic, and wrote a very idle book on the subject, entituled, *Daemonologie*. Shakespear seems to have chosen the subject of his *Macbeth* to please the taste of that prince.

The *bays* were burnt also to consume the flesh of the person on whose account these magical rites were performed. The cake is crumbled upon the image of Daphnis as upon the victim of this sacrifice.

105. The *mola* was made of meal salted and kneaded, *molita*, whence it was called *mola*: and victims were said to be immolated,

Loft to herself and rolling on the ground,
 Heedless of darksome night now clos'd around ! 115
 Ev'n thus, may disregarded Daphnis burn,
 Pine to despair, nor I his flame return.

Bring, &c.

This vest the faithless traitor left behind,
 Pledge of his love I give, to thee consign'd, 120
 O sacred earth ! thus plac'd beneath the door,
 O may the precious pledge its lord restore !

Bring, &c.

These powerful, poisonous plants in Pontus dug,
 (Pontus abounds in many a magic drug)
 Sage Moeris gave ; in dire enchantments brew'd, 125
 Moeris his limbs with these has oft bedew'd.
 Hence the fell forcerer have I seen become
 A wolf, and thro' wild forests howling roam,
 With these from graves the starting spectres warn,
 And whirl to distant fields the standing corn. 130

Bring, &c.

Take now these ashes from th' expiring wood,
 And strew them, Amaryllis, o'er the flood ;

immolated, because the foreheads of the victims, and the
 hearths and the knives had this cake crumbled on them.

RUAEUS.

115. *Night.*] In the original, *Perdita, nec ferae meminit de-
 cedere nocti* ; which sweet line, says Macrobius, is taken en-
 tirely from Varius.

125. *Sage Moeris.*] The description of the powerfulness of
 Moeris his magic, is sublime. Pontus was the land of poi-
 sons : Mithridates, who used to eat poison, reigned there ;
 and Medea was born in Colchis.

132. *These ashes.*] The most powerful of all incantations
 was to throw the ashes of the sacrifice backward into the
 water.

But backward cast them, dare not look behind,
 With these I'll strive to touch his harden'd mind ; 135
 But weak all art my Daphnis' breast to move,
 For he nor charms regards, nor pow'rs above.

Bring, &c.

Lo ! round the altar's sides what flames aspire !
 The dying embers burst into a fire ! 140
 Lift ! Hylax barks ! O may it lucky prove !
 But ah ! how oft are we deceiv'd that love ?
 Can it be truth ? my heart will Daphnis ease ?
 He comes, my Daphnis comes—Enchantments cease !

140. *The dying embers.*] The ancients thought the sudden blazing of the fire a very happy omen. For Plutarch relates, that the vestal virgins congratulated Cicero, and begged him to proceed in his prosecution of Catiline, and assured him of great success, because the fire of their sacrifice lighted of its own accord.

The End of the Eighth Eclogue.

ECLOGUE the Ninth.

ARGUMENT.

We are told by Servius that Moeris is the person who had the care of Virgil's farm, was his procurator, or bailiff, as we speak at present; and that when Virgil had from Augustus received a grant of his lands, one Arrius a centurion refused to admit him into possession, and would certainly have killed him if Virgil had not saved his life by swimming over the Mincius. This accident is mentioned in this Eclogue. Lycidas overtakes Moeris on his way to Rome, and asks him to repeat to him as they passed along some favourite verses, that he formerly had heard from him. Moeris grants his request, but suddenly breaks off in a natural and dramatic manner.

E C L O G U E the Ninth.

M O E R I S.

LYCIDAS, MOERIS.

LYCIDAS.

SAY, Moeris, to the city dost thou haste ?

MOERIS.

O Lycidas, the day's arriv'd at last,
 When the fierce stranger, breathing rage shall say,
 These fields are mine, ye veteran hinds, away !
 To whom, by fortune crush'd, o'ercome by fear, 5
 These kids (a curse attend them !) must I bear.

LYCIDAS.

Sure I had heard, that where yon' hills descend,
 And to the vale their sloping fummits bend,
 Down to the stream and ancient broken beech,
 Far as the confines of his pastures reach, 10
 Menalcas sav'd his all by skilful strains.

MOERIS.

Such was the tale among the Mantuan swains ;
 But verse 'mid dreadful war's mad tumults, proves
 As weak and powerless, as Dodona's doves,
 When the fierce, hungry eagle first they spy, 15
 Full on their heads impetuous dart from high.

Ver. 14. *Doves*] *Species pro genere*. Two doves were said to sit on the tops of the oracular oaks at Dodona, in Epirus ; and Epirus was often called Chaonia.

The boding raven from an hollow tree,
 Warn'd us to cease the strife, and quick agree ;
 Else of our liberty, nay life, depriv'd,
 Nor Moeris nor Menalcas had surviv'd.

20

LYCIDAS.

What rage the ruthless foldier could induce
 To hurt the sweetest favourite of the muse ?
 O direful thought ! hadst thou, Menalcas, bled,
 With thee had all our choicest pleasures fled !
 Who then could strew sweet flow'rs, the nymphs could sing
 Who shade with verdant boughs the crystal spring ? 26
 Or chant those lays which privately I read,
 When late we visited my fav'rite maid :

" Watch, Tityrus, watch, and see my goats receive
 " At morn fresh pasture, and cool streams at eve ; 30
 " Soon I'll return ; but as the flock you lead,
 " Beware the wanton ridg'ling's butting head."

MOERIS.

Or those to Varus, tho' unfinish'd strains——

" Varus, should we preserve our Mantuan plains,
 " (Obnoxious by Cremona's neighbouring crime) 35
 " 'The swans thy name shall bear to heav'n sublime."

25. *Who then could strew.*] Virgil certainly alludes to his eclogue, entitled *Daphnis*, composed on the death of Julius Cæsar.

35. *Cremona's.*] Augustus divided the lands of Cremona amongst his soldiers, because they sided with Antony. But that country not affording sufficient quantities of land for all the soldiers, part of the territory of Mantua was added and given away in that manner.

LYCIDAS.

Begin, if verse thou hast, my tuneful friend ;
 On trefoil fed so may thy cows distend
 Their copious udders ; so thy bees refuse
 The baneful juices of Cynnaean yews. 40
 Me too the muses love, and give me lays,
 Swains call me bard, but I deny their praise ;
 I reach not Varus' voice, nor Cinna's song,
 But scream like gabbling geese sweet swans among.

MOERIS.

Those strains am I revolving in my mind, 45
 Nor are they verses of a vulgar kind.
 " O lovely Galatea! hither haste!
 " For what delight affords the wat'ry waste ?
 " Here purple spring her gifts profusely pours,
 " And paints the river-banks with balmy flow'rs ; 50
 " Here, o'er the grotto the pale poplar weaves
 " With blushing vines a canopy of leaves ;

40. *Cynnaean.*] Corsica was called Cynrus by the Greeks. The honey of this island was most remarkably bad.

43. *Cinna's, &c.*] This undoubtedly was not Helvius Cinna the poet who was murdered, by mistaking him for Cornelius Cinna, and an enemy of Julius Caesar, at that emperor's funeral. But it seems to have been Lucius Cinna, the grandson of Pompey, and a great favourite of Augustus. Others think the words relate to two writers.

47. *O lovely Galatea.*] These verses in the original, assemble together some of the loveliest objects of wild unadorned nature. They are a copy of a beautiful passage in Theocritus, but greatly excel the Greek poet's description.

52. *Leaves.*] Observe how judiciously Virgil mentions only the shades of the vines ; it being yet only spring, there could be no grapes.

" Then quit the seas ! against the sounding shore

" Let the vext ocean's billows idly roar !"

LYCIDAS.

What's that you sung alone, one cloudless night ?

Its air I know, could I the words recite.

MOERIS.

" Why still consult, for ancient signs, the skies ?

" Daphnis ! behold the Julian star arise !

" Whose power the fields with copious corn shall fill,

" And cloath with richer grapes each sunny hill ; 60

" Now, Daphnis, for thy grandsons plant thy pears,

" Who luscious fruits shall crop in distant years."—

58. *Daphnis ! behold.*] Virgil, says La Cerda, seems to have contended with himself in this place for victory. He opposes these five verses to those which went before, *Huc ades o Galatea*, in which having excelled Theocritus, he now endeavours to excel himself. In the former he aimed only at the sweetness of expression, as became one who addressed himself to Caesar, who was then admitted among the gods. There he describes the delights of the spring, flowers, rivers, shades, such objects as tend to pleasure ; here, he produces the fruits of summer, corn, grapes, and pears, all which are useful to man. Who can say that Virgil speaks idly, or to no purpose ?

58. *Behold the Julian.*] The Julian star, according to Doctor Halley, was a comet ; and the same that appeared (for the third time after) in 1680. He says that the tail of that comet in its nearest approach to the sun, was sixty degrees long. So that it must have made a very considerable figure in the heavens, as Horace says the Julian star did. After Caesar's death a comet happened to appear, which the superstitious vulgar thought was the soul of Julius Caesar placed among the gods. Augustus' his courtiers propagated this notion.

59. *Fields.*] *Segetes* generally signifies the *fields* in Virgil's writings.

62. *Fruits.*] *Poma* is commonly used by the ancients for any esculent fruit.

Alas ! by stealing time how things decay !
 Once could I sing whole summer-suns away ;
 But ah ! my mem'ry fails—some wolf accurs'd 65
 Hath stopt my voice and look'd on Moeris first :
 But oft Menalcas will repeat these lays.

LYCIDAS.

My strong desires such slight excuses raise ;
 Behold no whisp'ring winds the branches shake ;
 Smooth is the surface of the neighb'ring lake ; 70
 Besides, to our mid-journey are we come,
 I see the top of old Bianor's tomb ;

63. *Alas ! by stealing.*] Here the shepherd breaks off abruptly, as if he had forgot the rest of the poem.

65. *My memory fails.*] Observe two things, says Ruæus, 1. That *oblita* is used in a passive signification. 2. That *mibi* is put for *me*. So in the *Aeneid*, *Nulla tuarum, accedita mibi neque vis a sororum*.

65. *Some wolf accurs'd.*] The ancients imagined, that if a wolf happened to look on any man first, the person was instantly deprived of his voice. *Λυκὸν εἶδὲς, ἐπαύζε τίς, ὡς ποτὶ εἶπεν*, says Theocritus.

68. *Causando* in the original, signifies by pretending to make excuses.

Stultus uterque locum immeritum causatur iniqui.

HORACE.

70. *The neighb'ring lake.*] The original says, *stratum filet æquor*. By *æquor* cannot possibly be understood the sea, as some translators have imagined. Catrou's observation is very ingenious. Our shepherds were already arrived at the edge of the lake of Mantua, which is formed round the city by the Mincio. Is not a lake a *sea* in the eyes of shepherds ?

72. *Bianor's tomb.*] Bianor, son of the river Tiber, by the daughter of Tiresias, named Manto, is fabled to have first of all fortified the city of Mantua, and to have given it the name of his mother. His tomb, as ancient ones usually were, was placed by the way-side. Hence the expression, *abi viator, siste viator*—absurdly introduced into modern epitaphs, not placed in such situations.

Here, Moeris, where the swains thick branches prune,
 And strew their leaves, our voices let us tune ;
 Here rest a while, and lay your kidlings down, 75
 Remains full time to reach the destin'd town ;
 But if you tempests fear and gathering rain,
 Still let us sooth our travel with a strain ;
 The ways seem shorter by a warbled song,
 I'll ease your burden as we pass along. 80

MOERIS.

Cease your request ; proceed we o'er the plain ;
 When HE returns we'll sing a sweeter strain.

74. *And strew their leaves.*] La Cerda says, they gathered the leaves to strew them on Bianor's tomb : but the epithet *densas* seems to point to *amputation*, which they wanted by growing too thick.

The End of the Ninth ECLOGUE.

E C L O G U E the Tenth.

A R G U M E N T.

The poet introduces his friend and patron Gallus, lying under a solitary rock in Arcadia, bewailing the inconstancy of his mistress Lycoris, by whom is meant the beautiful Citheris, a most celebrated actress, that left him to follow some officer into Germany. He describes the rural deities coming to visit Gallus in his distress, as they do Daphnis in Theocritus, and last of all Apollo himself, who all endeavour in vain to comfort him.

ECLOGUE the Tenth.

G A L L U S.

A I D the last labour of my rural muse,
 'Tis Gallus asks, auspicious Arethuse !
 But then such pity-moving strains impart,
 Such numbers as may touch Lycoris' heart ;
 Yet once more, tuneful nymph, thy succour bring ! 5
 What bard for Gallus can refuse to sing ?
 So while beneath Sicilian seas you glide,
 May Doris ne'er pollute your purer tide !

With Gallus' hapless love begin the lay,
 While browse the goats the tender-budding spray ; 10
 Nor to the deaf our mournful notes we sing,
 Each wood shall with responsive echoes ring.
 Where were ye, Naiads ! in what lawn or grove,
 When Gallus pin'd with unregarded love ?
 For not by Aganippe's spring we play'd, 15
 Nor Pindus' verdant hill your steps delay'd ;
 For him lamented every laurel grove ;
 The very tamarisks wept his hapless love ;

Ver. 10. *While browse the goats.*] The original calls them *simae capellae*, snub-nos'd goats, which will not bear to be rendered into English. This is one instance among a thousand that may be given, of the utter impossibility of giving any gracefulness to many images in the classics, which in a dead language do not appear gross or common.

13. *Where were ye, Naiads.*] This is finely imitated in that excellent piece of Milton intitled, *Lycidas*, but is originally in Theocritus.

His woes ev'n pine-topt Maenalus bemoan'd,
 Thro' all his caverns the dark mountain groan'd ; 20
 And cold Lycaëum's rocks bewail'd his fate,
 As sad beneath a lonely cliff he fate.
 Around him stood his flock in dumb surprize,
 A shepherd's lowly name I ne'er despise——
 Nor thou, sweet bard, disdain fair flocks to guide, 25
 Adonis fed them by the river's side;
 The heavy hind to him, and goat-herd haste,
 And old Menalcas wet from gathering wint'ry mast ;
 All of his love enquire ; Apollo came ; ——
 “ Why glows my Gallus' breast with fruitless flame ? 30
 “ To seek another youth thy false one flies,
 “ Thro' martial terrors and inclement skies.” ——
 Shaking the rustic honours of his brow,
 The lilly tall, and fennel's branching bough,
 Sylvanus came ; and Pan, Arcadia's pride, 35
 With vermil-hues, and blushing elder dy'd :
 “ Ah ! why indulge, he cries, thy boundless grief,
 “ Think'st thou that love will heed, or bring relief ?
 “ Nor tears can love suffice, nor showers the grass,
 “ Nor leaves the goat, nor flowers the honied race.” 40
 Sad Gallus then.—Yet O Arcadian swains,
 Ye best artificers of soothing strains !
 Tune your soft reeds, and teach your rocks my woes,
 So shall my shade in sweeter rest repose ;

41. *Sad Gallus then.*] This address of Gallus to the Arcadians is tender and moving ; especially that part of it where he wishes he had been only an humble shepherd like them.

O that your birth and bus'ness had been mine, 45
 To feed the flock, and prune the spreading vine!
 There some soft solace to my amorous mind,
 Some Phillis or Amyntas I should find :
 (What if the boy's smooth skin be brown to view,
 Dark is the hyacinth and violet's hue) 50
 There as we lay the vine's thick shades beneath,
 The boy should sing, and Phillis twine the wreath.
 Here cooling fountains roll thro' flow'ry meads,
 Here woods, Lycoris! lift their verdant heads,
 Here could I wear my careless life away, 55
 And in thy arms insensibly decay.
 Instead of that, me frantic love detains,
 'Mid foes, and deathful darts, and bloody plains :
 While you, and can my soul the tale believe,
 Far from your country, lonely wand'ring leave, }
 Me, me your lover, barbarous fugitive! 60
 Seek the rough Alps, where snows eternal shine,
 And joyless borders of the frozen Rhine.
 Ah! may no cold e'er blast my dearest maid,
 Nor pointed ice thy tender feet invade !

But when he just afterwards addresses his mistress, the lines are inexpressibly pathetic.

*Hic gelidi fontes ; hic mollia prata, Lycori ;
 Hic nemus : hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.*

And then he turns off at once to the evils his passion has exposed him to,

Nunc insanus amor, &c.

53. These four lines are taken from sir George Lyttelton's elegant eclogues, entitled, *The progress of love.*

I go, I go, Chalcidian strains to suit 65
To the soft sounds of the Sicilian flute !
'Tis fix'd !—to mazes of the tangled wood,
Where cavern'd monsters roam in quest of blood,
Abandon'd will I fly, to feed my flame
Alone, and on the trees inscribe her name ; 70
Fast as the groves in stately growth improve,
By pow'r congenial will increase my love. —
Mean while on summits of Lycaean hoar,
With the light nymphs I'll chase the furious boar,
Nor me shall frosts forbid with horn and hound 75
Parthenia's echoing forests to surround.
Now, now, thro' sounding woods I seem to go,
Twanging my arrows from the Parthian bow :
As if these sports my wounded breast could heal,
Or that fell god for mortal pangs would feel ! 80
But now, again no more the woodland maids,
Nor pastoral songs delight—Farewel, ye shades —
No toils of ours the cruel god can change,
Tho' lost in frozen desarts we should range,
Tho' we should drink where chilling Hebrus flows, 85
Endure bleak winter's blasts, and Thracian snows ;

65. *I go, I go.*] How justly are the various resolutions and shifting passions of a lover here described! First, he resolves to renew his poetical studies, (for Gallus was a writer of elegies) then suddenly he talks of leaving the world, and finding out some melancholy solitude, and hiding himself among the dens of wild beasts, and amusing himself by carving her name on the trees. Then all at once he breaks out into a resolution that he will spend all his time in hunting; but suddenly recollects with a sigh, that none of these amusements will cure his passion; and then bids adieu to all the diversions of which he had been speaking.

Or on hot India's plains our flocks should feed,
 Where the parch'd elm declines his sickening head;
 Beneath fierce glowing Cancer's fiery beams,
 Far from cool breezes and refreshing streams. 90
 Love over all maintains resistless sway,
 And let us love's all-conquering power obey.
 Thus, as a basket's rushy frame he wove,
 Your bard, ye muses, sung the pains of love,
 May Gallus view the song with partial eyes, 95
 For whom each hour my flames of friendship rise,
 Fast as when vernal gales their influence spread,
 The verdant alder lifts his blooming head.
 But haste, unwholsome to the loitering swain
 The shades are found, and hurtful to the grain; 100
 Ev'n juniper's sweet shade, whose leaves around
 Fragrance diffuse, at eve are noxious found.
 Homeward, ye well-fed goats, now sinks the day,
 Lo, glittering Hesper comes! my goats away.

87. *Feed.*] *Versemus*, in this place, in the original signifies to feed sheep, or drive them about, to feed.

88. *Elm.*] *Liber* in the original signifies the innermost bark of a tree.

89. Virgil uses the constellation of Cancer to express the tropic. The sun enters Cancer on the 10th or 11th of our June, which is the longest day of the year, and naturally the hottest.

99. *Loitering.*] La Cerda reads, *cunctantibus*, not *cantantibus*, in the original, which seems to be the true sense.

101. Even the shades of juniper, tho' it is a tree whose leaves are so fragrant, are still very unwholsome.

The End of the Tenth ECLOGUE.

THE
GEORGICS
OF
VIRGIL.

B O O K the First.

A R G U M E N T.

The poet begins with proposing the subject of his work; then easily slides into an invocation of such deities as were proper to assist him in his execution of it, artfully introducing Augustus among those deities. These circumstances are comprehended in the exordium. The book itself may be divided into six parts. I. The various methods of tilling ground, according to its different natures and qualities. II. The origin of agriculture. III. The instruments of husbandmen. IV. The proper seasons for the works of husbandmen. V. The prognostics of the weather. VI. The prodigies that attended the death of Julius Caesar.

T H E
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.
T O
C. CILNIUS MAECENAS.
B O O K the First.

W^Hat culture crowns the laughing fields with corn,
 Beneath what heavenly signs the glebe to turn,
 Round the tall elm how circling vines to lead,
 The care of oxen, cattle how to breed,
 What wond'rous arts to frugal bees belong, 5
 Maecenas, are the subjects of my song.

Ver. 1. *Fields.*] The subjects of the four following books of Georgics are particularly specified in these first four lines; *Corn* and *Ploughing* are the subject of the *first*, *Vines* of the *second*, *Cattle* of the *third*, and *Bees* of the *last*. By *seges* Virgil generally means the field. *Quo sidere* is very poetical for *quo tempore*. Mr. Dryden says only *when* to turn, &c. I apply *experientia* to the bees after Grimoaldus and Dr. Trapp, as more poetical than the other meaning, and as suitable to Virgil's manner of ascribing human qualities to these insects. I wonder, says Mr. Holdsworth, whence Seneca came to speak so lightly of Virgil's exactness in his Georgics: but this I am
G 5
sure

Lights of the world ! ye brightest orbs on high,
 Who lead the sliding year around the sky !
 Bacchus and Ceres, by whose gifts divine,
 Man chang'd the crystal stream for purple wine ; 10
 For rich and foodful corn, Chaonian mast :
 Ye Fauns and virgin Dryads, hither haste ;
 Ye deities, who aid industrious swains,
 Your gifts I sing ! facilitate the strains !
 And thou, whose trident struck the teeming earth, 15
 Whence strait a neighing courser sprung to birth.
 Come thou, whose herd, in Caea's fertil meads,
 Of twice an hundred snow-white heifers, feeds :
 Guardian of flocks, O leave Lycaeus' grove,
 If Maenalus may still retain thy love, 20
 Tegaeon Pan ; and bring with thee the maid
 Who first at Athens rais'd the olive's shade,

sure of, that the more I have looked into the manner of agriculture used at present in Italy, the more occasion I have had to admire the justice and force of his expressions, and his exactness even in the minutest particulars. **HOLDSWORTH.**

7. *Lights of the world.*] *Clarissima mundi lumina* cannot be put in apposition or joined with *Bacchus et alma Ceres* ; Virgil first invokes the *sun and moon*, and then *Bacchus*.—Varro's invocation proceeds in the same manner.

11. *Chaonian mast.*] The famous grove of Dodona was in Epirus or Chaonia ;

Dodonean acorns—————

18. *Snow-white heifers feeds.*] Aristaeus is here invoked, who taught the arts of curdling milk and cultivating olive trees. Triptolemus the son of Celeus was the inventor of the plough. In a contention between Neptune and Minerva about naming Athens, Neptune struck the earth with his trident, and produced a horse, and Pallas an olive tree.

19. *Lycaeus' grove.*] Lycaeus and Maenalus were two mountains in Arcadia, sacred to Pan.

Propitious Pallas ; nor be absent thou,
Fair youth, inventor of the crooked plough ;
Nor thou, Sylvanus, in whose hands is borne 25
A tender cypress by the roots up-torn :
Come, all ye gods and goddesses, who hear
The suppliant swains, and bless with fruits the year ;
Ye, who the wild spontaneous seeds sustain,
Or swell with showers the cultivated grain. 30
And thou, thou chief, whose seat among the gods,
Is yet unchosen in the blest abodes,
Wilt thou, great Caesar, o'er the earth preside,
Protect her cities, and her empires guide,
While the vast globe shall feel thy genial pow'r, 35
Thee as the god of foodful fruits adore,
Sovereign of seasons, of the storms and wind,
And with thy mother's boughs thy temples bind ?
Or over boundless ocean wilt thou reign,
Smooth the wild billows of the roaring main, 40
While utmost Thule shall thy nod obey,
To thee in shipwrecks shivering sailors pray,
While Tethys, if some wat'ry nymph could please,
Would give in dow'ry all her thousand seas ?

25. *Sylvanus.*] Medals represent Sylvanus bearing a young cypress tree torn up by the roots. Neither Mr. Dryden nor Mr. Benson seem apprehensive of this allusion, which is very picturesque.

31. *And thou.*] The poet here begins a fine address to Augustus, asking him whether he would chuse to be the god of earth, sea, or heaven. Catrou ingeniously imagines this address was added by Virgil the year before his death, when several other passages were likewise inserted ; for he says Augustus was not thus highly honoured till after his return from the conquest of Egypt.

Or wilt thou mount a splendid sign on high, 45
 Betwixt the Maid and Scorpius deck the sky ;
 Scorpius ev'n now his burning claws confines,
 And more than a just share of heav'n resigns ?
 Whate'er thou chuse ; (for sure thou wilt not deign,
 With dire ambition fir'd, in hell to reign, 50
 Tho' Greece her fair Elysian fields admire,
 Whence Proserpine refuses to retire)
 Look kindly down, my invocations hear !
 Assist my course, and urge my bold career ;

46. *Scorpius.*] *Libra*, or the Balance, was originally represented as held up by *Scorpius*, who extended his claws for that purpose out of his own proper dominions ; and that, under *Augustus*, or a little after his death, they made *Scorpius* contract his claws, and introduced a new personage (most probably *Augustus* himself) to hold the Balance. On the *Farnese globe* it is held by *Scorpius* ; (which by the way, may perhaps shew that work to have been previous to the *Augustan age* :) in several of the gems and medals on which we have the signs of the zodiac, it is held by a man. This is said to be *Augustus*. It was a very common thing among the Roman poets to compliment their emperors with a place among the constellations ; and perhaps the Roman astronomers took the hint of placing *Augustus* there, and that in this very situation, from *Virgil's* compliment of this kind to the emperor. To say the truth, there could scarce have been a place or employment, better chosen for *Augustus*. The astronomers originally were at a loss how to have the Balance supported : they were obliged, for this purpose, to make *Scorpius* take up the space of two signs in the zodiac ; which was quite irregular : and to be sure they would be ready to lay hold of any fair occasion of reducing to his due bounds again. On the other hand, it was quite as proper for *Augustus*, as it was improper for *Scorpius*, to hold it : for beside its being a compliment to him for his justice, or for his holding the balance of the affairs of the world, (if they talked of princes then, in the style we have been so much used

Pity with me, the simple ploughman's cares, 55
Now, now assume the god, and learn to hear our pray'rs.

In earliest spring, when melting snow distils
Adown the mountains' sides, in trickling rills,
When Zephyr's breeze unbinds the crumbling soil,
Then let my groaning steers begin the toil ; 60
Deep in the furrows press the shining share ;
Those lands at last repay the peasants' care,
Which twice the sun, and twice the frosts sustain,
And burst his barns furcharg'd with pond'rous grain.
But ere we launch the plough in plains unknown, 65
Be first the clime, the winds and weather shewn ;
The temper and the genius of the fields,
What each refuses, what in plenty yields ;
Here golden corn, there luscious grapes abound,
There grass spontaneous, or rich fruits are found ; 70
See'st thou not Tmolus, saffron sweet dispense ?
Her ivory, Ind ? Arabia, frankincense ?

to of late) Libra was the very sign that was said to preside over Italy ; and so Augustus in holding that, would be supposed to be the guardian angel of his country after his decease, as he had been so formally declared to be the father and protector of it in his life-time. Upon the whole, I do not see how any thought of this kind could have been carried on with more propriety, that this seems to have been, by the admirers or flatterers of that emperor. POLYMETIS, Dialogue II. page 170.

57. *In earliest spring.*] The writers of agriculture, says Dr. Martyn, did not confine themselves to the computation of astrologers ; but dated their spring from the end of the frosty weather. *Possunt igitur ac idibus Januariis, ut principem mensem Romani anni observet, auspicari culturarum officia.*

COLUMELLA.

63. *Which twice the sun, and twice.*] The meaning is, that, a field which has lain still two years together, instead of one (which

The naked Chalybes their iron ore ?
 To Castor Pontus give it's fetid pow'r ?
 While for Olympic games, Epirus breeds, 75
 To whirl the kindling car, the swiftest steeds ?
 Nature, these laws, and these eternal bands,
 First fix'd on certain climes, and various lands,
 What time the stones, upon th' unpeopled world,
 Whence sprung laborious man, Deucalion hurl'd. 80
 Come on then : yoke, and sweat thy sturdy steer,
 In deep, rich soils, when dawns the vernal year ;
 The turf disclos'd, the clinging clods unbound,
 Summer shall bake and meliorate thy ground ;
 But for light, steril land, it may suffice, 85
 Gently to turn it in autumnal skies ;
 There, lest the weeds o'er joyful ears prevail,
 Here, lest all moisture from the sands exhale.
 The glebe shall rest, whence last you gather'd grain,
 Till the spent earth recover strength again ; 90
 For where the trembling pods of pulse you took,
 Or from its rattling stalk the lupin shook,

(which last is the common method) will bear a much greater crop.

BENSON.

74. *Castor*.] 'Tis a vulgar mistake that the testicles of the beaver contain the *castor* ; for 'tis taken from some odoriferous glands about the groin of this animal. *Viroso* in this place does not mean *poisonous*, but *efficacious* or *powerful*.

87. *There, lest the weeds*.] Virgil speaks of the seasons of ploughing strong and light ground. The first, says he, must be ploughed early in the spring, and lie all summer ; and the other lightly in autumn : or else the strong ground will run all to weeds, and the light ground will have all its juices exhausted.

BENSON.

92. *The lupin shook*.] The *trifolium lupinus* is not our lupin, but that seed which they now in Italy lay afoak so long in water,

to

Or vetches' seed minute, will golden corn
 With alter'd grain that happy tilth adorn.
 Parcht are the lands, that oats or flax produce, 95 }
 Or poppies, pregnant with Lethean juice ;
 Nor want uncultur'd fallows grace or use.
 But blush not fattening dung to cast around,
 Or fordid ashes o'er th' exhausted ground.
 Thus rest, or change of grain, improves the field, 100
 Thus riches may arise from lands untill'd.

Gainful to burn the barren glebe 'tis found,
 While the light stubble, crackling, flames around :
 Whence, or to earth new stores of strength are lent,
 And large supplies of richer nutriment ; 105
 Or oozing off, and purify'd by fire,
 The latent, noxious particles transpire ;
 Or thro' the pores relax'd, the tender blade
 Fresh fructifying juices feels convey'd ;

to get rid of its bitterness, and even sell it so in their streets.
 'Tis but a very insipid thing at best. The *faselus* of the Romans is our lupin.

HOLDSWORTH.

95. *Parcht are the lands.*] That flax, oats, and poppies, dry and impoverish the soil, we have the concurrent testimony of Columella, Paladius, and Pliny. The Romans cultivated poppies, not our common scarlet ones, but our garden poppy.

MARTYN.

102. *To burn the barren glebe.*] Virgil, says Mr. Benson (but he seems to be mistaken) speaks of two different things, of burning the soil itself before the ground is ploughed, and of burning the stubble after the corn is taken off from arable land. The rapidity of *saepe levem stipulam crepitantibus urere flammis*, expresses the crackling and swiftness of the flame.

103. *While the light stubble.*] They still use the method so much recommended by Virgil (Geo. I. 84. to 93) of burning the stubble, especially in the more barren fields, in most parts of Italy; and about Rome in particular, where there is so much

Or genial heat the hollow glebe constrains, 110
 Braces each nerve, and binds the gaping veins ;
 Left slender showers, or the fierce beams of day,
 Or Boreas' baleful cold should scorch the crops away.

Much too he helps his labour'd lands, who breaks
 The crumbling clods, with harrows, drags, and rakes; 115
 Who ploughs across, and back, with ceaseless toil,
 Subdues to dust, and triumphs o'er the soil ;
 Plenty to him, industrious swain ! is giv'n,
 And Ceres smiles upon his works from heav'n.

much bad ground. The smoke is very troublesome when they do it ; and there had been so many complaints made of it to *Clement XI.* that he had resolved to forbid that practice. When the order was laid before that pope, to be signed by him ; a cardinal (who happened to be with his holiness) spoke much of the use of it ; shewed him this passage in *Virgil* ; and the pope on reading it, changed his mind, and rejected the order.

HOLDSWORTH.

113. *Cold should scorch.*] Burning applied to cold is not merely a poetical expression ; but we find it made use of by the philosophers. Aristotle says, that cold is accidentally an active body, and is sometimes said to burn and warm, not in the same manner as heat, but because it condenses or constrains the heat by surrounding it.

MARTYN.

116. *Who ploughs across.*] What the poet speaks of here retains the Roman name to this day, in many parts of England ; and is called, sowing upon the back ; that is, sowing stiff ground after once ploughing. Now, says *Virgil*, he that draws a harrow or hurdle over his ground before he sows it, *multum juvat arva*, for this fills up the chinks, which otherwise would bury the corn ; but then, says he, " Ceres always looks kindly on him, who ploughs his ground across again."

BENSON.

119. *And Ceres.*] *Virgil*, says *Spence*, in his *Georgics* gives us an idea of Ceres as regarding the laborious husbandman from heaven, and blessing the work of his hand with success. There is a picture like this in the famous old manuscript of *Virgil* in the Vatican ; and *Lucretius* has a strong description

tion

Ye husbandmen ! of righteous heav'n intreat 120
 A winter calm and dry ; a solstice wet ;
 For winter-dust delights the pregnant plain,
 The happiest covering for the bury'd grain ;
 Hence matchless harvests Myfia boasting reaps,
 And Gargarus admires his unexpected heaps. 125

Why should I tell of him, who, on his land
 Fresh-sown, destroys each ridge of barren sand ;
 Then instant, o'er the levell'd furrows brings
 Refreshful waters from the cooling springs ;
 Behold, when burning suns, or Sirius' beams 130
 Strike fiercely on the fields, and withering stems ;
 Down from the summit of the neighb'ring hills,
 O'er the smooth stones he calls the bubbling rills ;
 Soon as he clears, whate'er their passage stay'd,
 And marks their future current with his spade, 135
 Before him scattering they prevent his pains,
 Burst all abroad, and drench the thirsty plains.

tion of another deity, exactly in the same attitude, though with
 a very different regard.

POLYMETIS, page 103.

This image of Ceres puts one in mind of that beautiful one
 in the psalms—*Righteousness* (a person) *hath looked down from*
heaven. Ps. lxxviii. ver. 2.

121. *Solstice.*] Solstice, when used alone, is always used for
 the summer solstice by the ancients.

HOLDSWORTH.

125. *And Gargarus.*] This is one of those figures that raise
 the style of the Georgics, and make it so majestic.

133. *Rills.*] When the Persians were masters of Asia, they
 permitted those who conveyed a spring to any place, which
 had not been watered before, to enjoy the benefit for five
 generations ; and as a number of rivulets flowed from mount
 Taurus, they spared no expence in directing the course of
 their streams. At this day, without knowing how they came
 thither, they are found in the fields and gardens.

MONTESQUIEU'S Spirit of Laws, Vol. 1. p. 325.

Or who, lest the weak stalks be over-weigh'd,
Feeds down, betimes, the rank luxuriant blade,
When first it rises to the furrows' head.

140

Or why of him who drains the marshy sands,
Collects the moisture from th' absorbing sands,
When bursting from his banks, th' indignant flood
The country covers wide, with slimy mud,
In doubtful months, when swelling dykes resound
With torrents loud, and sweat and boil around.

145

Yet after all these toils of swains and steers,
Still rising ills impend, and countless cares;
The glutton goose, the Thracian cranes annoy,
Succory and noxious shade the crops destroy.
Th' eternal fire, immutably decreed,
That tillage should with toil alone succeed;
With cares he rous'd, and sharpen'd human hearts,
Bright'ning the rust of indolence by arts.

150

139. *Feeds down.*] It is a common practice among the farmers at present, when the corn is too rank and luxuriant to turn in their sheep and feed it down.

149. *Goose.*] Virgil speaks of the geese as a very troublesome bird, and very pernicious to the corn. They are still so in flocks, in the *Campania Felice*, the country which Virgil had chiefly in his eye when he wrote his Georgics.

HOLDSWORTH.

153. *With cares he rous'd.*] This account of the providential usefulness of some seeming evils, is not only beautifully poetical, but strictly philosophical. Want is the origin of arts: Infirmities and weaknesses are the cause and cement of human society. If man were perfect and self-sufficient, all the efforts of industry would be useless. A dead calm would reign over all the species.

' Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
' The common interest, and endear the tie;

Says

Ere Jove had reign'd, no swains subdu'd the ground, 155

Unknown was property, unjust the mound ;

At will they rov'd ; and earth spontaneous bore,

Unask'd, and uncompell'd, a bounteous store ;

He, to fierce serpents deathful venom gave,

Bade wolves destroy, and stormy ocean rave ; 160

Conceal'd the fire, from leaves their honey shook ;

And stop'd of purple wine each flowing brook ;

That studious want might useful arts contrive ;

From planted furrows foodful corn derive ;

And strike from veins of flints the secret spark : 165

Then first the rivers felt the hollow'd bark,

Sailors first nam'd and counted every star,

The Pleiads, Hyads, and the northern car.

Now snares for beasts and birds fell hunters place,

And wide surround with dogs the echoing chace ; 170

One, for the finny prey broad rivers beats,

One, from the sea drags slow his loaded nets.

Erst did the woods the force of wedges feel,

Now saws were tooth'd, and temper'd was the steel ;

Then all those arts that polish life succeed ; 175

What cannot ceaseless toil, and pressing need !

Great Ceres first the plough to mortals brought,

To yoke the steer, to turn the furrow taught ;

What time, nor mast, nor fruits the groves supply'd,

And fam'd Dodona sustenance deny'd : 180 }

Tillage grew toilsome, the choak'd harvests dy'd ;

Caltrops, wild oats, darnel, and burrs assail [vail ;

The beauteous tilth, and blights o'er the rich crops pre-

says the great moral poet in his *Essay on Man*. And this doctrine is strongly illustrated throughout the whole system.

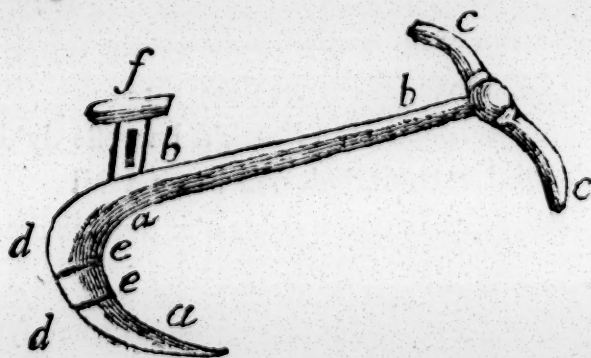
Unless with harrows' unremitted toil,
 Thou break, subdue, and pulverize the soil, 185
 Fright pecking birds, lop overshadowing bowers,
 And beg of smiling heav'n refreshful showers,
 Alas! thy neighbour's stores with envy view'd,
 Thoult shake from forest-oaks thy tasteless food.

Next must we tell, what arms stout peasants wield, 190
 Without whose aid, no crops could crown the field:
 The sharpen'd share, and heavy-timber'd plough,
 And Ceres' pond'rous waggon, rolling flow;

189. *From forest oaks.*] This is another instance of Virgil's poetical manner of telling plain things; instead of saying, You will have no crop; You will be forc'd, says he, to go into the wild forests, as man used to do, before he was civilized, for food.

192. *Plough.*] I have a drawing of an antique plough, from a brass figure in the jesuits college at Rome. I don't know the exact time or place in which it was made, but every part of it seems to me to have something to answer it in Virgil's description. The figure of it is below: and I take all the bending part of the wood, or the plough tail (mark'd *a*) to be what Virgil calls *buris*; *b* the pole or *temo*; *c* the two pieces that go over the necks of the oxen; which he calls *aures*; *d* the plough-share, *dentale*; *e* the two clouts of iron to fasten the plough-share, *dorsa*; and *f* the handle of the plough, or *stirva*. SPENCE.

I have borrow'd a few lines from Mr. Benson's translation of this passage.



And Celeus' harrows, hurdles, sleds to trail
 O'er the press'd grain, and Bacchus' flying sail. 195
 These long before provide, you, who incline
 To merit praise by husbandry divine !
 When bent betimes, and tam'd the stubborn bough,
 Tough elm receives the figure of the plough ;
 Eight foot the beam, a cumbrous length appears ; 200
 The earth-boards double ; double are the ears ;
 Light to the yoke the linden feels the wound,
 And the tall beech lies stretcht along the ground ;

195. *Bacchus' flying sail.*] The persons who were initiated into any of the ancient mysteries, were to be particularly good ; they looked upon themselves as separated from the vulgar of mankind, and dedicated to a life of singular virtue and piety. This may be the reason that the fan or van, the *myslica vannus Iacchi*, was used in initiations : The instrument that separates the wheat from the chaff being as proper an emblem as can well be, of setting apart the good and virtuous from the wicked or useless part of mankind.

In the drawings of the ancient paintings by Bellori, there are two that seem to relate to initiations ; and each of them has the *vannus* in it. In one of them, the person that is initiating, stands in a devote posture, and with a veil on, the old mark of devotion ; while two that were formerly initiated hold the van over his head. In the other there is a person holding a van, with a young infant in it. The latter may signify much the same with the scripture expression, entering into a state of virtue " as a little child." Mark x. 15. The van itself puts one in mind of another text relating to a particular purity of life, and the separation of the good from the bad, " Whose fan is in his hand, and he shall thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner ; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." Luke iii. 17.

HOLDSWORTH and SPENCE.

They fall for staves that guide the plough-share's course,
 And heat and hardening smoke confirm their force. 205
 More ancient precepts could I sing, but fear
 Such homely rules may grate thy nicer ear.
 To press the chalky floor more closely down,
 Roll o'er its surface a cylindric stone;
 Else thro' the loosen'd dust, and chinky ground, 210
 The grass springs forth, and vermin will abound.
 Oft working low in earth the tiny mouse
 Her garners makes, and builds her secret house;
 Their nest and chambers scoop, the eyeless moles,
 And swelling toads that haunt the darksome holes; 215
 The weasel heaps consumes, or prudent ant
 Provides her copious stores, 'gainst age or want.
 Mark likewise when in groves the almond blows,
 And bends with luxury of flow'rs his boughs;
 If fruit abound, the corn alike will thrive, 220
 And toil immense the copious threshing give;
 But if with full exuberance of shade,
 The clustering leaves a barren foliage spread,
 Then will the chaffy stalks, so lean and poor,
 In vain be trampled on the hungry floor. 225

208. Floor.] *Aream esse oportet—solidâ terrâ pavitam, maxime si est argilla, ne aestû paeminosa, in rimis ejus grana delitescant, et recipiant aquam, et ostia aperiant muribus & formicis. Itaque amurcâ solent perfundere, ea enim herbarum est inimica & formicarum, & talparum venenum.* Thus says Varro, from whom 'tis plain Virgil borrow'd this precept, as he has done many others.

Some prudent fowers have I seen indeed
 Steep with preventive care the manag'd seed,
 In nitre, and black lees of oil; to make
 The swelling pods a larger body take :
 But the well-disciplin'd, and chosen grains, 230
 Tho' quicken'd o'er slow fires with skilful pains, }
 Starve and degenerate in the fattest plains,
 Unless with annual industry and art,
 They cull'd each largest out, and plac'd apart :
 For such the changeful lot of things below, 235
 Still to decay they rush, and ever backwards flow.
 As one, who 'gainst a stream's impetuous course,
 Scarce pulls his slow boat, urg'd with all his force,
 If once his vigour cease, or arms grow slack,
 Instant, with headlong haste, the torrent whirls him back.

240. *The torrent.*] It is remarkable in Virgil, that he frequently joins in the same sentence the complete and perfect present with the extended and passing present; which proves that he considered the two, as belonging to the same species of time; and therefore naturally formed to co-incide with each other.

— *Si brachia forte remisit,
 Atque illum in praeceps prono rapit akveus omni.* Geor. I.

Terra tremit, fugere ferae. G. I.

*Praesertim si tempestas a vertice sylvis
 Incubuit, glomeratque ferens incendia ventus.* G. II,

— *Tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
 Mincius, et tenera praetexit arundine ripas.* G. III.

— *Illa notò citius, volucrique sagittâ,
 Ad terram fugit, et portu se condidit alto.* Aen. 5.
In

We too as much must mark Arcturus' signs, 241
 When rise the Kids, when the bright Dragon shines,
 As home-bound mariners, in tempests tost,
 Near Pontus, or Abydos' oyster'd coast.

When Libra measures out to day and night, 245
 Equal proportions both of shade and light;
 Work, work your bullocks, barley sow, ye swains,
 'Till winter's first impracticable rains.

In the same manner he joins the same two modifications of time in the past; that is to say, the complete and perfect with the extended and passing.

——— *Irruerant Danai & tectum omne tenebant.*

Aen. II.

*Tris imbris torti radios, tris nubis aquosae
 Addiderant, rutuli tris ignis, et alitis austri.
 Fulgores nunc terrificos sonitumque metumque
 Miscebant operi, flammisque sequacibus iras.*

Aen. VIII.

HARRIS'S *Hermes*, p. 133.

248. *Winter's.*] *Bruma* was not used by the ancients for the whole winter; but for one day only of it, the shortest day, or the winter solstice.

HOLDSWORTH.

248 *First.*] The word *extremus* in Latin has two very different significations; it may relate to the beginning, as well as the end of any thing; or to the nearest part of it, as well as the farthest off. Thus if one was to say, *in extremo ponte*, it may mean the *hither* extremity or end of the bridge; and when Virgil says his countrymen should work

Usque sub extremum brumae intractabilis imbrem:

It must be understood of the beginning of that rainy season, which was itself unfit for work; this took up the latter half of December, which was therefore turned all into holy-days, or the *Saturnalia*, in which the slaves that were at other times kept hard to work, were indulged in particular liberties, and spent all the time in mirth and joviality.

HOLDSWORTH.

Now in their beds, your poppies hide and flax;
 With frequent harrowings smooth the furrows' backs,
 Now while ye may, while the dark welkin low'rs, 251
 O'er the dry glebe while clouds suspend their show'rs.
 Sow beans in spring : in spring, the crumbling soil
 Receives thee, lucern! Media's flowery spoil;
 But still to millet give we annual care, 255 }
 When the Bull opes with golden horns the year,
 And the Dog sets, to shun his backward-rising star. }
 But if for wheat alone, for stronger grain,
 And bearded corn, thou exercise the plain,
 First let the morning Pleiades go down, 260
 From the sun's rays emerge the Gnosian crown,
 Ere to th' unwilling earth thou trust the seed,
 And marr thy future hopes with ill-judg'd speed.
 Some have begun, ere Maia sunk; but them
 Their full-ear'd hope mock'd with a flattering stem. 265
 If the mean vetch, or tare, thou deign to sow,
 Nor scorn to bid Aegyptian lentils grow,
 Signs, not obscure, Boötes, setting yields,
 Begin, and sow, thro' half the frosts, thy fields.

257. *His backward-rising star.*] By *averso astro*, in the original, 'tis most probable Virgil means the *Bull*; for that constellation rises with his hinder parts upwards. Throughout Mætilius the Bull is called *astrum aversum*. Some read *adversum*; but that is scarce reconcilable to the sense of this passage.

260. *Pleiades.*] The heliacal setting of these stars *Ere Atlantides* is pointed out by the word *abscondantur*. Wherever Virgil speaks of the setting of any stars in general, and without any such restriction, it is always to be understood of their natural setting.

HOLDSWORTH.

For this the golden sun, in his career, 270
 Rules thro' the world's twelve signs the quarter'd year;
 Five zones infold heav'n's radiant concave : one,
 Plac'd full beneath the burnings of the sun,
 For ever feels his culminating rays,
 And gasps for ever in the scorching blaze ; 275
 On each side which, two more their circles mark,
 Clog'd with thick ice, with gloomy tempests dark ;
 Betwixt the first and these, indulgent heav'n
 Two milder zones to feeble man hath giv'n ;
 Across them both a path oblique inclines, 280
 Where in refulgent order roll the signs.

272. *Five zones.*] Under the torrid or burning zone lies that part of the earth which is contained between the two tropics. This was thought by the ancients to be uninhabitable, because of the excessive heat : but later discoveries have shewn it to be inhabited by many great nations. It contains a great part of Asia, Africa, and South America. Under the two frigid or cold zones lie those parts of the earth, which are included within the two polar circles, which are so cold, being at a great distance from the sun, as to be scarce habitable. Within the arctic circle, near the north pole, are contained Nova Zembla, Lapland, Groenland, &c. within the antartic circle, near the south pole, no land as yet has been discovered ; tho' the great quantities of ice found there make it probable, that there is more land near the south than the north pole. Under the two temperate zones are contained those parts of the globe which lie between the tropics and polar circles. The temperate zone, between the arctic circle and the tropic of Cancer, contains the greatest part of Europe and Asia, part of Africa, and almost all North America. That between the antartic circle and the tropic of Capricorn, contains part of South America, or the Antipodes.

281. *Roll the signs.*] Here the poet describes the zodiac, which is a broad belt spreading about five or six degrees on each side of the ecliptic line, and contains the twelve constellations

Bleak Scythia's fnows, Rhiphaea's tow'ring clifts,
 High as this elevated globe uplifts,
 So low to fouthern Lybia it descends,
 And with an equal inclination bends. 285
 One pole for ever o'er our heads is roll'd,
 One, darkfome Styx and hell's pale ghosts behold
 Beneath their feet : here, the vaff Dragon twines
 Between the Bears, and like a river winds ;
 The Bears that ftill with fearful caution keep 290
 Unting'd beneath the furface of the deep.
 There, in dead filence, ftill night loves to reft,
 Night without end, with thickeft gloom oppreff ;
 Or from our hemisphere, the morning ray
 Returns alternate, and reftores the day ; 295
 And when to us the orient car fucceeds,
 And o'er our climes has breath'd its panting fteeds,

tations or figns. They are Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pifces. The ecliptic line cuts the equinoctial obliquely in two oppofite points, whence the poet calls the zodiac *obliquus fignorum ordo*. It traverses the whole torrid zone, but neither of the temperate zones ; fo that, *per ambas*, muft mean *between*, not *thro'* them. Thus prefently after, fpeaking of the Dragon, he fays it twines, *per duas arctos* : now that confellation cannot be faid to twine thro' the two Bears, but between them. The zodiac is the annual path of the fun, thro' each fign of which he paffes in about the fpace of a month. He is faid to be in one of thofe figns, when he appears in that part of the heavens, where thofe ftars are of which the fign is compofed. MARTYN.

290. *The Bears.*] Mr. Benfon thinks this line in the original fpurious, and omits it as fuch.

There ruddy Vesper, kindling up the sky,
 Casts o'er the glowing realms his evening eye. [know,
 Hence, changeful heav'n's rough storms we may fore-
 The days to reap, the happiest times to sow ; 301
 When with safe oars it may be fit to sweep
 The glassy surface of the faithless deep ;
 When to the waves the well-arm'd fleet resign,
 And when in forests fell the timely pine. 305

Nor vain to mark the varying signs our care,
 Nor the four seasons of th' adjusted year ;
 Whene'er the hind a sleety show'r detains,
 Full may a work that soon must cost him pains
 To hurry forward, when the sky is fair, 310
 He may with prudent foresight now prepare ;
 Now to a point the blunted share may beat ;
 Scoop troughs from trees, mark flocks, or sacks of wheat;
 Long spars and forks may sharpen ; or supply
 Amerian twigs the creeping vine to tie ; 315
 With Rubean rods now baskets may be wove, [stove.
 Now grain be ground with stones, now parch'd upon the

313. *Mark.*] How came the Romans not to find out the art of printing many ages ago ? The Caesars impressed their whole names on grants and letters, and this practice was so common a one, that even shepherds impressed their names on their cattle.

——— *Vivi quoque pondera melle
 Argenti coquito, lentumque bitumen abeno,
 Impressurus ovi tua nomina ; hanc tibi lites
 Aufert ingentes lectus professor in arvo.*

Calphurnius, Ecl. 3. 85. SPENCE.

The same observation is made by Toland, in his Letters of the Druids.

Nor do the laws of man, or gods above,
 On sacred days some labours disapprove ;
 No solemn rite should e'er forbid the swain, 320
 The mead with sudden streams o'erflow'd, to drain :
 To raise strong fences for the springing corn,
 To lay the snare for birds, to burn the thorn ;
 Nor to forbear to wash the bleating flock,
 And soundly plunge them in the healthy brook. 325
 Oft' the slow ass's sides the driver loads,
 With oil, or apples, or domestic goods,
 And for the mill brings an indented stone,
 Or with black lumps of pitch returns from town.
 For various works behold the moon declare 330
 Some days more fortunate—the fifth beware !
 Pale Orcus and the Furies then sprung forth,
 Iapetus and Coeus, heaving earth
 Produc'd, a foul abominable birth !
 And fierce Typhoeus, Jove who dar'd defy, 335
 Leagu'd in conjunction dire to storm the sky !
 Ossa on Pelion, thrice t' uplift they strove,
 And high o'er nodding Ossa roll above

337. *Ossa on Pelion.*]

Ter sunt conati imponere Pelio Ossam.

To represent the giants piling up the mountains on each other,

The line too labours, and the words move slow.

POPE.

The verse cannot be read without making pauses ; so judiciously are the hiatus's contrived. Hesiod has nobly described this battle of the giants in his Theogony. See Milton's battle of the angels, Book 6, and compare it with Hesiod.

Olympus shagg'd with woods ; th' almighty fire
 Thrice dash'd the mountains down with forky fire. 340
 Next to the tenth, the seventh to luck inclines,
 For taming oxen, and for planting vines ;
 Then best her woof the prudent housewife weaves ;
 Better for flight the ninth, adverse to thieves.

Ev'n in cold night some proper tasks pursue, 345
 Or when gay morn impearls the field with dew ;
 At night dry stubble, and parcht meadows mow,
 At night, fat moisture never fails to flow ;
 One, by the glowing ember's livid light,
 Watches and works the livelong winter's night, 350
 Forms spiky torches with his sharpen'd knife ;
 Mean while with equal industry his wife,
 Beguiling time sings in the glimmering room,
 To chear the labours of the rattling loom ;
 Or on the luscious must while bubbles rise, 355
 With leaves the trembling cauldron purifies.
 But cut the golden corn in mid-day's heat,
 And the parcht grain at noon's high ardor beat.
 Plough naked ; naked sow ; the busy hind
 No rest but in bleak wintry hours can find ; 360
 In that drear season, swains their stores enjoy,
 Mirth all their thought, and feasting their employ ;

357. *Corn.* The Romans did not *thresh* or *winnow* their corn : in the heat of the day, as soon as it was reaped, they laid it on a floor made on purpose, in the middle of the field, and then they drove horses or mules round about it, till they trod all the grain out.

BENSON.
 This was the common practice too all over the east ; and that humane text of scripture, " Thou shalt not muzzle the
 " ox that treadeth out the corn," is a plain allusion to it.

The genial time to mutual joys excites,
 And drowns their cares in innocent delights.
 As when a freighted ship has touch'd the port, 365
 The jovial crews upon their decks resort,
 With fragrant garlands all their sterns are crown'd,
 And jocund strains from ship to ship resound.
 Yet then from leafless oaks their acorns strip,
 From bays and myrtles bloody berries slip, 370
 For noxious cranes then plant the guileful snare,
 O'er tainted ground pursue the listening hare;
 Pitch toys for stags, and whirling round the string,
 Smite the fat doe with Balearic sling,
 While on the ground the snow deep-crufted lies, 375
 And the clog'd floods push down thick flakes of ice.

Why should I sing autumnal stars and skies;
 What storms in that uncertain season rise?
 How careful swains should watch in shorter days,
 When soften'd summer feels abated rays: 380
 Or what, in showery spring, the farmer fears,
 When swell with milky corn the bristling ears.
 When hinds began to reap, and bind the field,
 All the wild war of winds have I beheld
 Rise with united rage at once, and tear 385
 And whirl th' uprooted harvest into air,
 With the same force, as by a driving blast
 Light chaff or stubble o'er the plains are cast.
 Oft in one deluge of impetuous rain,
 All heav'n's dark concave rushes down amain. 390 }
 And sweeps away the crops and labours of the swain. }

The roaring rivers drown the oxen's toil,
 The tossing seas in furious eddies boil ;
 Great Jove himself, whom dreadful darkness shrouds,
 Pavilion'd in the thickness of the clouds, 395
 With lightning arm'd his red right hand puts forth,
 And shakes with burning bolts the solid earth :
 The nations shrink appall'd ; the beasts are fled ;
 All human hearts are sunk, and pierc'd with dread :
 He strikes vast Rhodope's exalted crown, 400
 And hurls huge Athos, and Ceraunia down.
 Thick fall the rains ; the wind redoubled roars ; [shores.
 The god now smites the woods, and now the founding
 Warn'd by these ills, observe the starry signs,
 Whither cold Saturn's joyless orb inclines, 405

395. *Great Jove himself pavilion'd.*] This description is very sublime. While the winds are roaring, the rains descending, the rivers overflowing, he nobly introduces Jupiter himself surrounded with a thick cloud, and from thence darting his thunderbolts, and splitting the loftiest mountains, all the earth trembling and astonished with fear and dread. I follow Mr. Benson and Masvicius, in reading *plangit* (instead of *plangunt*) because it adds a poetical and bold image of Jupiter's striking the woods and shores. This description, fine as it is, is excelled by the storm in the 18th psalm. God is described flying upon the wings of the wind—"He made darkness his secret place, his pavilion round about him, with dark water and thick clouds to cover him.—The springs of waters were seen, and the foundations of the round world were discovered at thy chiding, O Lord." See the whole, too long to be transcribed, but inimitably great and sublime.

Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii !

398. *The beasts are fled.*] Dr. Trapp justly observes, that *fugere* being put in the preter-perfect tense has a wonderful force : "We see, says he, the beasts scudding away, and
 "they

Whither light Hermes' wandering flame is driv'n.
 First to the gods be all due honours giv'n ;
 To Ceres chief her annual rites be paid,
 On the green turf, beneath a fragrant shade,
 When winter ends, and spring serenely shines, 410
 Then fat the lambs, then mellow are the wines,
 Then sweet are slumbers on the flowery ground,
 Then with thick shades are lofty mountains crown'd,
 Let all thy hinds bend low at Ceres' shrine ;
 Mix honey sweet, for her, with milk and mellow wine ;
 Thrice lead the victim the new fruits around, 416
 And Ceres call, and choral hymns resound :

"they are gone, and out of sight in a moment." It is a pity that learned gentleman did not preserve the force of this tense in his translation. He has not only used the present tense, but has diminished the strength and quickness of the expression, which Virgil has made to consist only of two words, *fugere ferae*, by adding an epithet to beasts, and mentioning the place they fly to :

—————Savage beasts to coverts fly.

Dryden has been guilty of the same oversight :

And flying beasts in forests seek abode.

The Latin, says Mr. Benson, is as quick and sudden as their flight. *Fugere ferae*, they are all vanished in an instant. But in Mr. Dryden's translation, one would imagine these creatures were drove out of some inclosed country, and were searching for entertainment in the next forest. Yet Mr. Benson himself did not observe the beauty of the tense.

Far shakes the earth, beasts fly, and mortal hearts
 Pale fear dejects.

417. *And Ceres call.*] This sacrifice the Romans called *Ambarvalia* from *ambire arva* ; for they led the victim round the fields.

Prefume not, swains, the ripen'd grain to reap,
 Till crown'd with oak in antic dance ye leap,
 Invoking Ceres, and in solemn lays, 420
 Exalt your rural queen's immortal praise.

Great Jove himself unerring signs ordains,
 Of chilling winds, and heats, and driving rains ;
 The moon declares when blust'ring Auster falls,
 When herds should be confin'd near shelt'ring stalls.
 When winds approach, the vex'd sea heaves around, 426
 From the bleak mountain comes a hollow sound,
 The loud blast whistles o'er the echoing shore,
 Ruffle the murm'ring woods, the rising billows roar.
 From the frail bark that ploughs the raging main, 430
 The greedy waves unwillingly refrain,
 When loud the corm'rant screams and seeks the land,
 And coots and sea-gulls sport upon the sand ;
 And the tall hern his marshy haunts forsakes,
 And tow'rs to heav'n above the 'custom'd lakes : 435
 Oft, stars fall headlong thro' the shades of night,
 And leave behind white tracks of trembling light,
 In circles play light chaff and wither'd leaves,
 And floating feathers dance upon the waves.

427. *Mountain.*] This puts me in mind of a passage in Thomson's Seasons on the same subject, the approach of a storm :

Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
 Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm ;
 And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
 And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook
 And cave presageful send a hollow moan,
 Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.

THOMSON'S Winter, ver. 70.

But when keen lightnings flash from Boreas' pole, 440
 From Eurus' house to west, when pealing thunders roll,
 The country swims, all delug'd are the dales,
 And every pilot furls his humid sails.

Sure warnings still the stormy showers precede ;
 The conscious cranes forsake the vapoury mead, 445

The heifer tossing high her head in air,
 With broader nostrils snuffs the gale afar ;
 Light skims the chirping swallow o'er the flood,
 The frogs croak hoarsely on their beds of mud ;
 Her eggs abroad the prudent pismire bears, 450
 While at her work a narrow road she wears.

Deep drinks the bow ; on rustling pinions loud, [crowd.
 The crows, a numerous host ! from pasture homeward
 Lo ! various sea-fowl, and each bird that breeds

In Asian lakes, near sweet Cayster's meads, 455

O'er their smooth shoulders strive the stream to fling,

And wash in wanton sport each snowy wing ;

Now dive, now run upon the wat'ry plain,

And long to lave their downy plumes in vain :

446. *The heifer tossing.*] This prognostic is taken from Aratus ; and I would observe once for all, that almost each of the signs of weather are borrowed (and indeed beautified) from that ancient writer. The line

Arguta lacus, circumvolitavit hirundo,

with several that precede and follow it, are intirely taken with very small alterations from Varró Atacinus, as may be seen in Servius.

452. *Deep drinks the bow.*] Alludes to the ridiculous notion of the ancients, that the rainbow suck'd up water with its horns from lakes and rivers.

Loudly the rains the boding rook demands, 460
 And solitary stalks across the scorching sands.
 Nor less the virgins nightly tasks that weave
 With busy hands, approaching storms perceive,
 While on the lamp they mark the sputtering oil,
 And fungous clots the light, adhesive, soil. 465
 Nor less by certain marks may'st thou descry
 Fair seasons, in the calm, and stormless sky ;
 Then shine the stars with keener lustre bright,
 Nor Cynthia borrows from her brother's light.
 No fleecy clouds flit lightly through the air, 470
 The mists descend, and low on earth appear.
 Nor Thetis' halcyons basking on the strand,
 Their plumage to the tepid sun expand :
 Nor swine deep delving with the sordid snout,
 Delight to toss the bundled straw about. 475
 To watch the setting sun, the fullen owl
 Sits pensive, and in vain repeats her baleful howl ;
 Nisus appears sublime in liquid air,
 And Scylla rues the ravish'd purple hair :

461. *Stalks across the scorching sands.*] The line admirably represents the action of the crow, and is an echo to the sense. Those who are fond of alliteration, are delighted with this verse, where so many S's are found together: they may say the same of *plena pluviam, & vocat voce*, in the preceding line.

467. *Calm.*] According to what Pierius found in several old manuscripts: *ex imbres* in the original, for the poet begins to speak of fair weather.

477. *In vain repeats.*] Dr. Trapp interprets *nequicquam*, in vain, Dr. Martyn, *not* repeats.—If we understand the poet to be speaking of the continuance of fair weather, *nequicquam* must signify *not*; because, according to Pliny, the hooting of the owl at such a time would be a sign of rain.

Mr.

Where with swift wings she cuts th' etherial way, 480
 Fierce Nifus presses on his panting prey,
 Where Nifus wheels, she swiftly darts away.
 With throats compress'd, with shrill and clearer voice,
 The tempest gone, the cawing rooks rejoice;
 Seek with unusual joys, on branches hung 485
 Their much-lov'd nests, and feed their callow young.
 Not that to them a genius heav'n hath lent,
 Or piercing foresight of each dark event,
 But when the changeful temper of the skies,
 The rare condenses, the dense rarifies, 490
 New motions on the alter'd air impress,
 New images and passions fill their breast:
 Hence the glad birds in louder concert join,
 Hence croaks th' exulting rook, and sport the lusty kine.

But if thou shalt observe the rapid sun, 495
 And mark the moons their following courses run,
 No night serene with smiles, shall e'er betray,
 And safely may'st thou trust the coming day:
 When the young moon returning light collects,
 If 'twixt her horns we spy thick gloomy specks, 500
 Prepare ye mariners and watchful swains
 For wasteful storms and deluges of rains!

Mr. Dryden has strangely translated this passage:

And owls that mark the setting sun declare,
 A star-light evening and a morning fair.

487. *Not that to them.*] This is a remarkable instance of Virgil's clear and beautiful style in expressing even the most abstruse notions. The meaning of the words *fato prudentia major*, which occasions difficulties among the commentators, seems to be, a greater knowledge (than men have) in the fate of things.

But if a virgin-blush her cheeks o'erspread,
 Lo, winds ! they tinge her golden face with red ;
 But the fourth evening if she clearly rise, 505
 And sail unclouded thro' the azure skies,
 That day, and all the following month behind,
 No rattling storm shall feel of rain or wind :
 And sailors sav'd from the devouring sea,
 To Glaucus vows prefer and Panope. 510
 Nor less the sun, when eastern hills he leaves,
 And when he sinks behind the blushing waves,
 Prognostics gives : he brings the safest signs
 At morn, and when the starry evening shines :
 When with dark spots his opening face he clouds, 515
 Shorn of his beams, and half his glory shrouds,
 Suspect thou showers : the south from ocean borne,
 Springs noxious to the cattle, trees and corn.
 When scatter'd are his rays ; with paleness spread
 When faint Aurora leaves Tithonus' bed ; 520
 Ah ! can the leaves their ripening grapes defend !
 Such heaps of horrid hail on rattling roofs descend !
 Observe too, when he ends his heavenly race,
 What various colours wander o'er his face :

505. *Clearly.*] The verse in the original is quoted by Seneca in his works, in a different manner from the common reading,—*Plena ruc obtusis per coelum cornibus ibit* ; and he certainly meant it so, by what he says of it. If this be the true reading, it may be thus understood.—“ If on the fourth day of the new moon, its WHOLE DISK appears, and the horns of that part of it which is enlighten'd, are sharp, and well-pointed ; then the next day, and all the following to the end of the month, will be free both from high winds and rain.”

HOLDSWORTH.

The dusky, rain ; the fiery, wind denotes ; 525
 But if with glowing red he mingle spots,
 Then showers and winds commixt shalt thou behold
 In dreadful tempest thro' black aether roll'd ;
 In such a night, when soon the waves will roar,
 None should persuade to loose my bark from shore. 530
 But if his orb be lucid, clear his ray,
 When forth he ushers, or concludes the day,
 Fear not the storms : for mild will be the breeze,
 And Aquilo but gently wave the trees.
 In fine, what winds may rise at evening late, 535
 What showers may humid Auster meditate,
 By surest marks th' unerring sun declares,
 And who, to call the sun deceitful, dares ?
 He too foretells sedition's secret schemes,
 Tumults and treasons, wars and stratagems. 540

525. *The dusky, rain.*] Tho' I believe there is no one thing in the whole language of the Romans, that we are more at a loss about now, than their names of colours ; it appears evidently enough, that *coeruleus* was used by them for some dark colour or other. One might bring a number of instances to prove this, but one or two from Virgil will be sufficient :

Coeruleus pluviâ denuntiat.

— *Coeruleus supra caput astitit imber,*

Noctem hyememque ferens, et inborruit unda tenebris.

Aen. 3. 195.

POLYMETIS, pag. 167. note 24.

536. *Auster meditate.*] Several of the commentators that have been used to consider the winds only in a natural way, and never perhaps in an allegorical one, are greatly offended at the word *cogitet* here. The *thinking of a wind* is to them the highest pitch of absurdity that can be. They are therefore for altering the passage into *quid cogat et humidus auster*, or *quid*

He too, bewailing her unhappy doom,
 When fell her glorious Caesar, pitied Rome ;
 With dusky redness veil'd his chearful light,
 And impious mortals fear'd eternal night :
 Then too, the trembling earth, and seas that rag'd, 545
 And dogs, and boding birds dire ills presag'd :
 What globes of flame hath thund'ring Aetna thrown,
 What heaps of sulphur mix'd with molten stone,
 From her burst entrails did she oft expire,
 And deluge the Cyclopean fields with fire ! 550
 A clank of arms and rushing to the wars,
 The sound of trampling steeds, and clattering cars,
 Heard thro' th' astonish'd sky, Germania shock'd,
 The solid Alps unusual tremblings rock'd !
 Thro' silent woods a dismal voice was heard, 555
 And glaring ghosts all grimly pale appear'd,

concitet—*contra omnes codices*, as themselves say : If these gentlemen would please to consider that it is not they, but Virgil that is speaking here ; that the winds were frequently represented as persons in his time ; that he had been used to see them so represented both in Greece, and in his own country ; that they were commonly worshipped as gods—and they may perhaps be persuaded not to think this so strange an expression for him to use. POLYMETIS, Dial. 13. p. 204.

Horace speaking of the river Aufidus says finely, *Diluvium* *MEDITATUR agris*. Od. 14. Lib. 4.

541. *He too bewailing.*] 'Tis something strange that the best historians, Pliny, Plutarch, and Appian, join in relating these prodigies. Plutarch not only mentions the paleness of the sun, for a whole year after Caesar's death, but adds, that the fruits rotted for want of heat. Appian relates the stories of the clashing of arms, and shouts in the air, an ox speaking with a human voice, statues sweating blood, wolves howling in the Forum, and victims wanting entrails.

At dusky eve ; dumb cattle silence broke,
 And with the voice of man (portentous !) spoke !
 Earth gapes aghast ; the wondering rivers stop ;
 The brazen statues mourn, cold sweats from ivory drop ;
 Monarch of mighty floods, supremely strong, 561
 Eridanus, whole forests whirl'd along,
 And rolling onwards with a sweepy sway,
 Bore houses, herds, and helpless hinds away :
 The victims' entrails dire events forbode ! 565
 Wolves howl in cities ! wells o'erflow with blood.
 Ne'er with such rage did livid lightnings glare,
 Nor comets trail such lengths of horrid hair !
 For this, Philippi saw, with civil rage,
 The wretched Roman legions twice engage ; 570

562. *Eridanus*.] The redundant syllable in *fluviorum*, is expressive of the inundation. Dion Cassius relates, that the river Po did not only overflow and occasion prodigious damages, but left likewise great quantities of serpents when it retired.

569. *Philippi*.] Many learned critics have disputed about the meaning of this passage, which was never cleared up till Mr. Holdsworth published a judicious dissertation on the subject. He is of opinion, that Virgil means by his two battles of Philippi, not two battles fought on the same individual spot, but at two distant places of the same name, the former at Philippi (alias *Thebae Phthiae*) near Pharsalus in Thessaly : the latter at Philippi near the confines of Thrace. And tho' historians (all except Lucius Florus) for distinction's sake, call the latter battle only by the name of Philippi ; yet, as there was one at Philippi near Pharsalia, in sight of which the former was fought, the poets call both by the same name. As to the reasons which he says determined Virgil to call both battles by the same name, the chief of them I think is this : that in compliment to Augustus, he might impress the superstitious Romans with a belief, that the vengeance of the gods
 against

Emathia, (heaven decreed !) was twice imbru'd,
 And Haemus' fields twice fatten'd with our blood.
 The time at length shall come, when lab'ring swains,
 As with their ploughs they turn these guilty plains,
 'Gainst hollow helms their heavy drags shall strike, 575
 And clash 'gainst many a sword, and rusty pike ;
 View the vast graves with horror and amaze,
 And at huge bones of giant heroes gaze.

Ye guardian gods of Rome, our pray'r,
 And Romulus, and thou, chaste Vesta, hear! 580

against the murderers of Caesar was denounced by numbers of prodigies and omens ; and in so remarkable a manner that there appeared in it a particular stroke of providence, according to the heathen superstition, that the second battle which proved fatal to the Romans, should be fought in the same province with the first, and near a second Philippi.

574. *Ploughs.*] The delicate art of the poet in returning to his subject by inserting this circumstance of the ploughman's finding old armour, cannot be sufficiently admired. Philips has finely imitated it in his *Cyder*, where speaking of the destruction of old Ariconium, he adds,

— Upon that treacherous tract of land
 She whilom stood ; now Ceres, in her prime,
 Smiles fertile, and, with ruddiest freight bedeck'd
 The apple-tree, by our fore-fathers' blood
 Improv'd, that now recalls the devious muse,
 Urging her deskin'd labours to pursue.

PHILIPS'S *Cyder*, Book I.

579. *Ye greater guardian gods.*] Virgil (says Mr. Spence) by the *diu patri*, here means the great train of deities, first received all over the east, and afterwards successively in Greece and Italy. Among the Romans, the three deities received as supreme, were Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva ; and therefore Virgil adds the word *indigetes*, to fix it to the *θεοὶ ἀσπί*, or the three great supreme gods, received as such in his own country. *Indigetes* here is much the same as *noſtri* in Juvenal, when

Ye, who preserve with your propitious powers,
 Etrurian Tiber, and the Roman towers !
 At least permit this youth to save the world
 (Our only refuge !) in confusion hurl'd :
 Let streams of blood already spilt atone 585
 For perjuries of false Laomedon !
 The gods, O Caesar, envy and complain,
 That men and earthly cares thy steps detain ;
 Where sacred order, fraud and force confound,
 Where impious wars and tumults rage around, 590 }
 And every various vice and crime is crown'd :
 Dishonour'd lies the plough ; the banish'd swains
 Are hurried from th' uncultivated plains ;

when he speaks of these very deities. Mr. Spence observes how faultily Dryden has translated this passage.

POLYMETIS, Dial. 20.

582. *Etrurian.*] Virgil in this place, and in Geo. 2. 530. speaks of Tuscany and Rome almost as if they were upon the same footing ; chiefly out of complaisance for his great patron Mecaenas, who was descended from the old race of the kings of that country.

HOLDSWORTH.

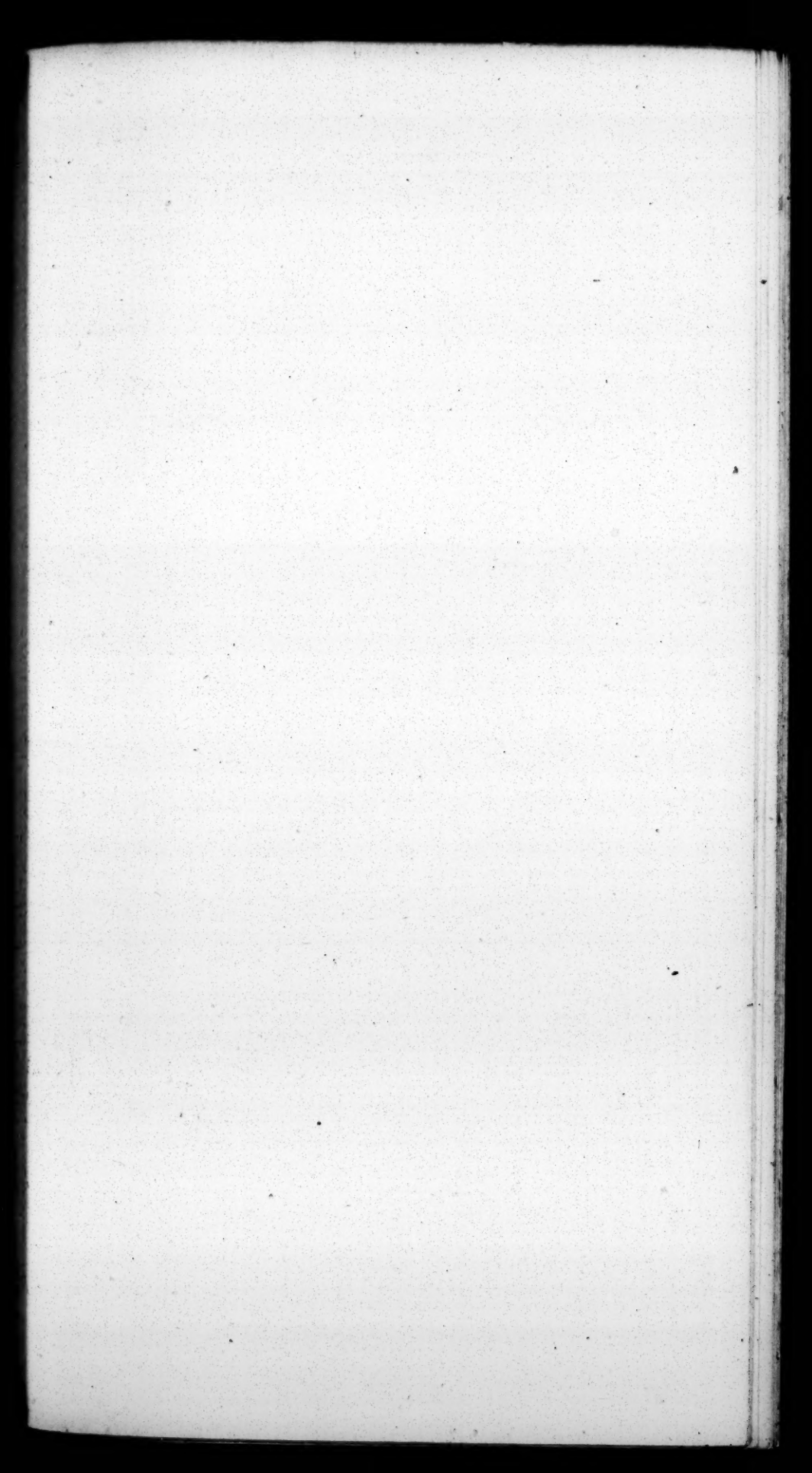
586. *False Laomedon.*] Apollo and Neptune being hired by Laomedon, to assist him in building a wall round his city of Troy, when the work was finished were by him defrauded of their pay.

587. *O Caesar.*] I at first translated it, *great* Caesar ; but observed afterwards that the poet joins no epithet to Caesar ; I therefore omitted so improper an addition ; which weakens the dignity and simplicity of the original.

590. *Impious wars.*] The amiable and gentle temper, the universal benevolence of Virgil, appear in this striking passage. A certain melancholy flow in the numbers, and an air of pity for the distresses of his fellow-creatures, make these lines more valuable than even the poetry they contain. At the time I write this, 1761, it is impossible to read them without feeling their force.

The sickles into barbarous swords are beat,
 Euphrates here, there war the Germans threat. 595
 The neighbouring cities break faith's mutual bands,
 And ruthless Mars raves wild o'er all the lands.
 As when four furious courfers whirl away
 The trembling driver, nor his cries obey,
 With headlong haste swift-pouring o'er the plains, 600
 The chariot bounds along, nor hears the reins.

The End of the First GEORGIC.





MAECENAS.

Ex Gemmis Philippi de Stoch.

THE
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.

BOOK the Second.

A R G U M E N T.

This Book, which treats of planting, is divided into seven parts. I. The poet speaks of the various ways in which trees are produced, both by nature and art. II. Their different species and sorts, and how they are to be managed. III. What soils are most suitable to each; from whence he naturally digresses into an encomium on the soil and productions of Italy. IV. The method of discovering and distinguishing the nature of each soil. V. The culture and management of the vine. VI. The culture of the olive and other trees. VII. The praises of a country life.

THE
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.
BOOK the Second.

THUS far of tillage, and the heav'nly signs ;
Now thee I sing, O Bacchus, god of vines !
With thee the native race of sylvan trees,
And olives, blooming late by slow degrees.
Come, sacred fire, with luscious clusters crown'd, ;
Here all the riches of thy reign abound ;

Ver. 2. *Now thee I sing, O Bacchus.*] Instead of coolly proposing the subject he is going to treat of, viz. the cultivation of vines, olives, &c. the poet at once breaks out into a rapturous address to Bacchus, in the style of an hymn ; the image contained in the following lines is beautiful and picturesque.

*Huc, pater o Lenææ, veni: nudataque musto
Tinge novo mecum direptis crura cothurnis.*

We see the god treading the wine-press. Mr. Dryden's translation of this passage is remarkable.

“ Come

Each field replete with blushing autumn glows,
 And in deep tides for thee, the foaming vintage flows.
 O come, thy buskins, sacred fire, unloose,
 And tinge with me thy thighs in purple juice. 10

Kind nature trees, by several means, supplies,
 Spontaneous some, by art untaught, arise ;
 At will, by brook, in lawn or meadow, bloom
 Th' obedient osier, and the bending broom ;
 While with the poplar on the mazy shore 15
 The willow waves its azure foliage hoar.
 Part by the force of quick'ning seed arise,
 Hence tow'rs the lofty chesnut to the skies ;
 And Aesculus, great monarch of the grove,
 Supreme and stateliest of the trees of Jove : 20
 With the proud oak, beneath whose awful shade
 Religious rites fond Greece devoutly paid.
 Some pour an infant forest from their roots,
 Thus elms and cherries spring in frequent shoots.
 Thus too, their tender tops Parnassus' bays, 25
 Beneath their mother's sheltering shadow, raise.

Come, strip with me, my god, come drench all o'er
 Thy limbs in must of wine, and drink at ev'ry pore.

11. *Kind nature trees.*] The poet says, wild trees are produced three several ways, 1. SPONTANEOUSLY, 2. by SEEDS, 3. and by SUCKERS. He still uses the same order at verse the 61st, &c.

22. *Greece devoutly paid.*] In this, and many other passages, he glances at, and ridicules the superstitions of the Grecians.

24. *Cherries.*] This kind of fruit had not been brought into Italy many years before Virgil wrote. 'Tis said, Lucullus first introduced them into that country after he had conquered Mithridates.

So spring, as nature various means approves,
 Or woods, or shrubs, or consecrated groves.
 Yet other means hath sage experience found ;
 This, from the mother-trunk, within the ground 30
 The tender sucker sets ; another takes
 Of larger growth, cross-split, or sharpen'd stakes.
 And oft, in native earth, the boughs we see
 Inverted, multiply the parent tree :
 Nor fears the gard'ner oft, the smallest shoot 35
 To trust to earth ; some ask not for a root.
 Oft from cleft olive-trunks with age decay'd
 New fibres shoot, and springs a wond'rous shade.
 Even different trees a mutual change assume,
 And still improv'd, with alien foliage bloom ; 40
 By pear-trees are ingrafted apples borne,
 And stony corneils blushing plums adorn.
 Search then, ye farmers, with sagacious mind,
 How best to manage every various kind.
 With culture civilize your savage trees, 45
 Nor let your lands lie dead in slothful case.

29. *Yet other means.*] Having spoken of trees which spontaneously propagate their species, he now proceeds to mention those methods which are used by human industry. These are by suckers, sets, layers, cuttings, pieces of cleft wood, and ingrafting.

MARTYN.

32. *Cross-split or sharpen'd stakes.*] There are two ways of planting setters. The *quadrisidas fudes* (says Mr. Benion) is when the bottom is slit across both ways ; the *acuto robore* is when it is cut into a point, which is called the colt's foot.

37. *Olive.*] It is common in Italy to see old olive-trees, that seem totally dead in the trunk, and yet have very flourishing young heads. The same is often as surprizing in old willows ;

What joy the grapes on Ismarus to crop,
And cloath 'with olives huge Taburnus' top!

Haste then my better part of fame, my pride,
Do thou my course at once assist and guide ; 50
Do thou, Maecenas, share with me the gale,
And o'er expanded seas unfurl the swelling sail.
Nor soars my thought ambitious to rehearse,
All nature's wonders, in my shorter verse ;
A task like this, would ask an hundred tongues, 55
An hundred mouths, and iron-armed lungs.
Still will we keep the friendly shore at hand,
Nor dare to launch too boldly from the land :

willows ; of which I have seen several (and particularly some in the garden island in St. James's Park) which send down a tap-root from their heads through the trunk, that often seems intirely decayed ; and so form a young tree on an old stock, which looks as flourishing as the other does rotten. SPENCE.

47. *Ismarus.*] Ismarus is a mountain in Thrace ; Taburnus in Campania, famous for olives.

51. *Do thou, Maecenas.*] If I mistake not, no patron was ever so finely commended as Maecenas is in this work. Indeed all Virgil says to him, or of him, is as follows, viz. In the first book, Virgil names him in the second line. In the second book, he begs him to assist him in his undertaking, and declares he owes the greatest part of his reputation to him. In the third book, he mentions the difficulty of the task Maecenas had put him upon, and again begs his assistance. In the fourth book, he desires him to look favourably upon that piece, and addresses it more particularly to him, than he had done any of the former. 'Tis true there is no great eclat in all this, but the compliment to Maecenas lies here. Virgil undertook a very necessary work for the service of his prince, and his country. He declares it was Maecenas put him upon it. He found the work very difficult, but still Maecenas persuades him to persist in it ; and by his patronage, and his generosity, enabled him to go through with it ; so that the whole,

Nor will I tire thine ear with fables vain,
With long preambles and superfluous strain.

60

The trees, whose shades spontaneous pierce the skies,
Tho' barren, beautiful and vig'rous rise;
For nature works beneath : but if thy toil
Graft, or transplant them in a gentler soil,
Their genius wild, where-e'er thou lead'st the way, 65
Of discipline sequaceous, will obey :
So will the sprouts that from the root arose
If plac'd amid the plain, in order'd rows :
For else the mother's overshadowing top,
Or blasts the fruit, or checks the promis'd crop. 70
All trees from seed advance by slow degrees,
And for a future race their shades increase ;
Fruits of the richest juice in time decay,
And ! birds amid neglected vineyards prey ;
All, all, must feel the force of toil intense, 75
Be to the trench confin'd, and tam'd with large expence.

all the justice that is done to Augustus's character, all the service that work could do his country, was owing to Maecenas. This was complimenting him in the finest manner. He was speaking of a minister. The character he gives him is that of a person, who employs his power and fortune in countenancing one that could be of use to his master, and the public. Here the poet makes a graceful figure, whilst he shews his gratitude by owning his obligations, and at the same time that he makes his court to his patron, he makes his patron's court to his prince.

BENSON.

59. *Fables vain.*] He points at the truth, and the dignity, and the utility of his subject, exalting it above subjects of mere fiction, and Grecian tales.

61. *The trees.*] The poet had before mentioned the three ways by which wild trees are produced.—Here he follows the same

same

With best success, from truncheons olives spring ;
 Layers of the vine the fairest clusters bring ;
 From sets will bloom the myrtle, plant of love ;
 But quite full-grown transplant the hazle grove ; 80
 Ash too, tho' tall, and that fair tree whose boughs
 Bear the broad crown that binds Alcides' brows,

same method, and shews by what culture each sort may be meliorated.

MARTYN.

80. *But quite full-grown.*] A curious dissertation on the subject of these verses by Mr. Holdsworth was published not long ago, of whom I have heard many able judges declare, that he understood Virgil better than any man living. In my humble opinion, says he, after the general conclusion of planting out,

*Scilicet omnibus est labor impendendus ; & omnes
 Cogenda in fulcum, ac multâ mercede domnidæ,*

And the short remark added, that some trees thrive best, not by the ordinary way of planting, but by layers and truncheons,

Sed truncis oleae melius, &c.

Virgil proceeds next to another sort of planting, still more difficult ; and tells us, that not only young plants and truncheons may be removed, but even grown trees. This is methodical, and consistent with what preceded, the transition easy, and the climax just. We continue still in the plantation, but we are led into a part we had seen nothing of before, a grove of some considerable growth, newly planted. And therefore we may observe, all the epithets and decorations, used here to enliven the subject, are suited to trees of an advanced age,

Plantis edurae coryli, &c.

By this interpretation it must appear already, that the epithet *ardua*, which is a difficulty with Dr. Martyn, becomes plain and easy : and indeed it was so far from embarrassing

Jove's oak, or palm high-waving o'er the steep,
 And fir now fit to tempt the dang'rous deep.
 On th' horrid arbutë graft the walnut's spray,
 Or bid with apples barren planes look gay :

8;

me, that it helped to explain what went before. We advance farther in the plantation, and are shewn, that even the palm too (an exotic) may be transplanted when tall, or in poetic language, be born a tree ; and so likewise the fir, when grown fit for a mast.

We may very reasonably imagine, that in Virgil's time, that age of luxury, the great men of Rome transplanted tall trees from woods and nurseries, as is frequently done with us, into their walks and gardens. Maecenas, to whom this book is dedicated, had a garden, we know, on the Esquiline hill, celebrated by Horace and others ; and 'tis not improbable, that in order to bring it sooner to perfection, this might be practis'd there, perhaps just at the time when Virgil was writing this Georgic. If so, how artfully does the poet here insinuate, with his usual address, a compliment to his patron ? I only hint this as a conjecture ; but am more inclin'd to believe, that something of the wilderness part of a garden is intended, by the palm being placed amongst the others ; which, tho' a fruit-tree in its own country, yet is not improperly put here in the company of forest-trees, because it did not bear fruit, nor was counted a fruit-tree at that time in Italy : as Pliny informs us lib. iii. c. 4. and therefore could be planted only, as the others might, for beauty and ornament to gardens.

Whether Virgil had any such view or not, there can at least be no doubt but that removing tall trees was practis'd among the Romans. We find by Pliny, that the common method of making their *arbuta*, or plantations for supporting vines, was by planting out elms, when about five years old, or about twenty foot high : lib. xvii. c. 11. And the fir, mention'd above, which Pliny tells us had so deep a root, must certainly have been a tall tree, and yet, he says, was removed. As to the palm, tho' it did not arrive to such perfection in Italy, as to bear fruit, yet we find it was common there ; and a tree which not only would bear removing, but thrive the better for it.

And

Oft has the beech improv'd the chefnut bore,
 The wild afh stood with pear-tree bloffoms hoar,
 And fwine beneath the elm have crack'd the mafly ftore. }
 The fwains who graft, employ a different art 90
 From thofe, who to the bark a bud impart :
 For thro' the rind where bürfts the tender gem,
 Faft by the knot they wound the taper ftem,

And to put this matter about removing tall trees beyond difpute, Virgil himfelf confirms it in another place, and makes his Corycius Senex put it in practice, Georg. iv. 144, &c.

*Ille etiam feras in verfum diftulit ulmos,
 Eduramque pirum, & spinos jam pruna ferentes,
 Jamque miniftrantem platanum potantibus umbras.*

'Tis true, moft of the commentators and translators feem not to have rightly apprehended the meaning of this paffage, as Dr. Martyn obferves, and thereby have loft much of its fpirit. But fince he has render'd it juftly, and given it its full force, I doubt not, but when he compares the expreffions of both paffages together, he will more eafily agree to my interpretation; and will be furpriz'd, as indeed I am, how it before escap'd him. With regard to the verfes following in the original,

*Inferitur vero ex foetu nucis arbutus horrida,
 Et steriles platani malos gessere valentes :
 Castaneae fagos, ornusque incanuit albo
 Flore pyri, glandemque fues fregere sub ulmis.*

Mr. Holdsworth obferves, that Virgil had before fpoken of grafting in the common method, from ver. 32 to 34.

*Et saepe alterius ramos impune videmus
 Vertere in alterius, mutatamque insita mala
 Ferre pyrum, et prunis lapidosa rubescere corna.*

As he there grafts only kernel fruit on kernel, and ftone on ftone, he fhews plainly that he underftood what was the common method, and conforms to it. Again, from ver. 49 to

Then in the slit an alien bud confin'd,
 They teach to knit congenial with the rind ; 95
 Or thro' the polish'd trunk they wedge their way,
 And in the chasm insert a lusty spray ;
 Ere long to heaven the soaring branches shoot,
 And wonder at their height, and more than native fruit.
 Besides, of sturdy elms a different kind, 100
 Of willows, and the watery lote, we find.
 Th' Idean cypress various looks assumes,
 In numerous forms the luscious olive blooms :
 Nor Orchite's nor the Radius' kind is one,
 Nor Pausia's by their bitter berries known ; 105
 In several hues to shine the apple loves ;
 How many species deck Alcinous' groves ?
 What vast varieties each orchard bears,
 In syrian, bergamot, and pounder pears ?
 Nor the same grape Hesperia's vintage fills, 110
 Which Lesbos gathers from Methymnia's hills.

§1. under the articles of improvements, he observes, that chance-plants, which are naturally wild, may be civilized by grafting, as crabs, sloes, or wild plums, &c.

——— *Tamen haec quoque si quis
 Inferat, aut scrobibus mandet mutata subactis,
 Exuerint sylvestrem animum.*

Having thus sufficiently mentioned this practice, and there being no necessity to repeat it as he endeavours to be as concise as possible ; he proceeds in the next place to tell us, that trees of different kinds may likewise be grafted on each other. And as he had before shew'd, in the four preceding verses, what art could do in transplanting tall trees ; he advances here to shew what may likewise be done by the help of art in grafting, viz. that any scion may be ingrafted on any stock. All the translators have mistaken this passage : and I am indebted to Mr. Holdsworth for his clearing it up.

Of Thasian vines, and Mareotic white,
 One loves a fatten'd foil, and one a light ;
 Best are the Pfythian when by Phoebus dry'd ;
 Thin is Lageos' penetrating tide, 115 }
 By which the faltering tongue, and staggering feet are
 Purple there are, and grapes which early spring ; [try'd ;
 But in what strains thee, Rhaetic, shall I sing ?
 Yet dare not thou with Falern juice contest !
 Amminean wines for body are the best ; 120
 To these, ev'n Tmolus bends his cluster'd brows,
 And, king of vine-clad hills, Phanaeus bows ;
 By these is Argos' lesser grape surpass,
 Tho' fam'd so much to flow, so long to last.
 Nor thine, O Rhodes, I pass, whose streams afford 125
 Libations to the gods, and crown the board :
 Nor thee, Bumastus, grape of plumpest size ;
 But can my song each various race comprise ?
 He that cou'd each rehearse, the sands might count,
 That from the Lybian waste in whirling eddies mount :
 Or tell the billows as they beat the shores, 131
 When all th' Ionian sea with raging Boreas roars.
 Nor every race will thrive in every ground :
 Willows along the river-banks abound ;

114. *Pfythia.*] *Passum* is a wine made from raisins, or dried grapes, common both in Italy and the south of France. But the grapes are only hung up to dry, and not squeezed into barrels like our common raisins.

126. *Libations.*] Among the Romans the first course consisted of flesh, and the second of fruit, at which they poured out wine to offer to the gods, called a Libation.

ARBUTHNOT on Coins.

127. *Plumpest.*] *Bumastus* is the very large red sort of grapes,

While alders bud in wet and weeping plains, 135

'The wild ash on the ridgy mountain reigns :

Myrtles the shore, the baleful eugh approves

Bleak blasts, and Bacchus funny fummits loves.

Th' extreme of cultivated lands survey,

The painted Scythians, and the realms of day ; 140

All trees allotted keep their several coasts,

India alone the fable ebon boasts ;

Sabaea bears the branch of frankincense.

And shall I sing, how teeming trees dispense,

Rich fragrant balms in many a trickling tear, 145

With soft Acanthus' berries, never fear ?

From Aethiop woods, where woolly leaves increase,

Hpw Syrians comb the vegetable fleece ?

Or shall I tell how India hangs her woods,

Bound of this earth, o'er Ocean's unknown floods ? 150

Where to such height the trees gigantic grow,

That far they leave the sounding shaft below,

'Tho' skill'd the natives are to bend the bow. }

The Median fields rich citron fruits produce,

'Tho' harsh the taste, and clammy be the juice ; 155

grapes, that they give you so perpetually in their deserts in Italy : and particularly at Florence. It has its name from its shape, each grape being like the teat of a cow ; Varro half latinises the word, where he calls it *bumamma*. HOLDSWORTH.

154. *Median fields.*] Virgil here gives a very high character of this tree, both for its beauty and usefulness: I take it that he means orange-trees, which were brought first into Italy from Media in his time. As the orange-tree was not yet generally known in Italy, he describes it by its likeness to a tree, well known there, the laurel-tree. The leaves, says he, resemble the leaves of that ; but have a finer and more diffused smell, and it is almost always beautify'd with flowers. Pliny (Nat. Hist. lib.

Blest antidote ! which when in evil hour,
 The step-dame mixes herbs of poisonous pow'r,
 And crowns the bowl with many a mutter'd spell,
 Will from the veins the direful draught expell.
 Large is the trunk, and laurel-like its frame, 160
 And 'twere a laurel, were its scent the same.
 Its lasting leaf each roaring blast defies,
 Tenacious of the stem its flourets rise :
 Hence a more wholesome breath the Medes receive,
 And of pale fires the lab'ring lungs relieve. 165
 But neither Media's groves, her teeming mold,
 Fair Ganges' flood, nor Hermus thick with gold ;
 Nor all the stores Panchaia's glebe expands,
 Where spices overflow the fragrant sands ;
 Nor Bactrian, nor Arabian fields can vie 170
 With the blest scenes of beauteous Italy.
 Bulls breathing fire her furrows ne'er have known,
 Ne'er with the dreadful dragon's teeth were sown,

lib. xii. c. 3.) calls the orange-tree *malus Medica*, and his account of it agrees extremely with this in Virgil.

HOLDSWORTH.

[166. *Media's groves*.] We are now come to his most beautiful praises of Italy; nor is it easy to determine which is greatest, the poet's skill, or the patriot's love of his country. He glances at Greece with some ironical sarcasms, in several parts of this passage; particularly he seems to laugh at some of their absurd stories: in these lines,

*Haec loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem
 Invertere, satis immanis dentibus hydri,*

he alludes to the famous story of Jason. Mr. Thomson has finely imitated these praises of Italy in his *Seasons*, where he celebrates Great Britain. See his *Summer*.

Whence sprung an iron crop, an armed train,
 With helm and spear embattell'd on the plain. 175
 But plenteous corn she boasts, and gen'rous wine,
 'The luscious olive, and the joyful kine.
 Hence o'er the plain the warrior-steam elate,
 Prances with portly pace in martial state ;
 Hence snowy flocks wash'd in thy sacred stream, 180
 Clitumnus, and of victims the supreme
 The mighty bull, have led thro' shouting trains
 Rome's pompous triumphs to the lofty fanes.
 The fields here spring's perpetual beauties crown,
 Here summer shines in seasons not her own. 185
 Twice teem the cattle each revolving year,
 And twice the trees their blushing burthen bear.
 Nor here the tygres rears her rav'nous breed,
 Far hence is the fell lion's savage feed ;
 Nor wretched simplers specious weeds invite, 190
 For wholesome herbs, to crop pale aconite :
 Nor scaly snakes in such vast volumes glide,
 Nor on a train so thick, and spires so lofty ride.
 Add too around what far-fam'd cities rise,
 What stately works of daedal artifice ! 195

181. *Clitumnus*.] Now called *Clitumno* ; it rises a little below the village of Campello in Umbria. The inhabitants near this river still retain a notion, that its waters are attended with a supernatural property, imagining that it makes the cattle white that drink of it ; a quality for which it is likewise celebrated by many of the Latin poets.

See MELMOTH'S Pliny, p. 455.

With tow' red towns her craggy cliffs are crown'd,
 Here rivers roll old moss-grown ramparts round.
 And shall my song her two-fold ocean boast,
 That pours its riches forth on either coast?
 Her spacious lakes; first mighty Larius, thee? 200
 And thee, Benacus, roaring like a sea?
 Her ports and harbours, and the Lucrine mounds,
 From which the beating main indignant bounds;
 Where Julius' flood of bonds impatient raves, 204
 And calm Avernus' streights confine the Tuscan waves?
 Her fields with brass and silver veins have glow'd,
 Her pregnant rocks with gold abundant flow'd.

196. *With towns—cliffs.*] Among other instances of the happiness of Italy, Virgil mentions its having so many towns built on craggy rocks and hills. There were more formerly, and are several still. In the road from Rome to Naples, you see no less than four in one view, from the hill on which Piperno now stands; reckoning that for one of them. These were very useful, of old, for defence, among such a fighting race of people: and are so still for their coolness, in so hot a climate, that they are generally forced to drive their flocks of sheep up upon the mountains for the summer-season, as they usually feed them in the sheltered plains by the sea-side in the winter.

HOLDSWORTH and SPENCE.

198. *Ocean.*] Italy is washed on the north side by the Adriatic sea, or gulph of Venice, which is called *mare superum*, or the upper sea; and on the south side by the Tyrrhene or Tuscan sea, which is called *mare inferum*, or the lower sea. The Larius is a great lake at the foot of the Alps in the Milanese, now called, *Lago di Como*. The Benacus is another great lake in the Veronese, now called *Lago di Garda*; out of which flows the Mincius, on the banks of which our poet was born. Lucrinus and Avernus are two lakes of Campania; the former of which was almost wholly destroyed by an earthquake, but the latter is still remaining, and now called *Lago d'Averno*.

She birth to many a race, in battle brave,
 The Marſian, and the Sabine ſoldier, gave.
 Her's are Liguria's ſons, untaught to yield, 210
 And her's the Volſci, ſkill'd the ſpear to wield ;
 The Decian hence, and Marian heroes came,
 Hence ſprung thy line, Camillus, mighty name :
 Hence roſe the Scipios, undiſmay'd in fight,
 And thou, great Caefar, whoſe victorious might, 215
 From Rome's high walls, on Aſia's utmoſt plains,
 Aw'd into peace fierce India's rage reſtrains.
 All hail, Saturnian foil ! hail, parent great
 Of fruits and mighty men ! my lays repeat
 For thee this argument of ancient art, 220
 Theſe uſeful toils, rever'd of old, impart ;
 For thee, I dare unlock the ſacred ſpring,
 And thro' the Roman ſtreets Aſcrean numbers ſing.

214. *The Scipios.*] The elder Scipio delivered his country from the invaſion of Hannibal, by transferring the war into Africa ; where he ſubdued the Carthaginians, impoſed a tribute upon them, and took hoſtages. Hence he had the ſurname of Africanus, and the honour of a triumph. The younger Scipio triumphed for the concluſion of the third Punic war, by the total deſtruction of Carthage. Hence they were called the thunderbolts of war—*duo fulminabelli Scipiadas*. Aen. 6. Virgil borrows the expreſſion, from Lucretius, *Scipiades belli fulmen*.

218. *All hail.*] The concluſion of Pliny's natural hiſtory bears a very near reſemblance to this paſſage, and is very beautiful. *Ergo in toto orbe et quacunq; coeli convexitas vergit, pulcherrima eſt omnium, rebusque merito principatum obtinens, Italia, reſtrix parensque mundi altera ; viris, ſoeminis, ducibus, militibus, ſervitiis, artium praeſtantia, ingeniorum claritatibus, jam ſitu ac ſalubritate coeli atque temperie, accēſſu cunctarum gentium facili, littoribus portuoſis, benigno ventorum aſſlatu.* The whole paſſage is worth the reader's peruſal.

Next, of each various soil the genius hear !
Its colour, strength, what best dispos'd to bear. 225
Th' unfriendly cliffs, and unprolific ground,
Where clay jejune, and the cold flint abound,
Where bushes overspread the barren field,
Will best th' unfading grove of Pallas yield :
Here the wild olive woods luxuriant shoot, 230
And all the plains are strewn with sylvan fruit.
But the rich soil with genial force endu'd,
All green with grass, with moisture sweet bedew'd,
Such as we oft survey from cavern'd hills,
Whence many a stream descends in dripping rills, 235 }
And with rich ooze the fatt'ning valley fills ;
Or that which feels the balmy southern air,
And feeds the fern unfriendly to the share ;
Ere long will vines of lustiest growth produce,
And big with bounteous Bacchus' choicest juice, 240
Will give the grape, in solemn sacrifice,
Whose purple stream the golden goblet dyes,
When the fat Tuscan's horn has call'd the god,
And the full chargers bend beneath the smoaking load.
But bullocks would you rear, and herds of cows, 245
Or sheep, or goats that crop the budding boughs ;
Seek rich Tarentum's plains, a distant coast,
And fields like those my luckless Mantua lost,
His silver-pinion'd swans where Mincio feeds,
As slow they sail among the wat'ry weeds. 250
There for thy flocks fresh fountains never fail,
Undying verdure cloaths the grassy vale ;
And what is crop'd by day, the night renews,
Shedding refreshful stores of cooling dews.

A fable mold and fat beneath the share, 255
 That crumbles to the touch, of texture rare,
 And (what our art effects) by nature loose,
 Will the best growth of foodful grain produce :
 And from no field, beneath pale evening's star 259
 With heavier harvests fraught, returns the nodding car.
 Or else the plain, from which the ploughman's rage
 Has fell'd the forest, hoar through many an age,
 And tore the tall trees from their ancient base,
 Long the dark covert of the feathery race ;
 Banish'd their bow'rs, abroad they mount in air, 265
 While shines the recent glebe beneath the share.
 For the lean gravel of the sloping field,
 And mould'ring stones, where snakes their mansions build,
 Where in dark windings filthy reptiles breed,
 And find sweet food their lurking young to feed ; 270
 To bees ungenial, scarcely will supply
 Their casia-flow'rs, and dewy rosemary.
 In that blest ground, which from its opening chinks,
 At will a steaming mist emits, or drinks ;
 Which blooms with native grass for ever fair, 275
 Nor blunts with eating rust the sliding share,

272. *Roremque ministrat.*] *Ros* does not in this place signify *dew*, as Dryden translates it, but *rosemary*. Virgil says that the dry hungry soil (now under consideration) is of so barren a nature, that not even those common plants, casia and rosemary, will grow in it. Dr. Martyn has proved the casia here mentioned not to be the celebrated aromatic casia, but a very vulgar herb. Perhaps the epithet *humiles*, in this place, ought to be construed *mean* or *insignificant*, rather than *low of growth*.

Round thy tall elms the joyous vines shall weave ;
And floods of luscious oil thy olives give ;
This, with due culture, thou shalt surely find
Obedient to thy plough, and to thy cattle kind. 280
Such fertile lands rich Capua's peasants till,
And such the soil beneath Vesuvus' hill ;
And that, where o'er Acerrae's prostrate tow'rs
Clanius his swelling tide too fiercely pours.

Rules to know different soils I next dispense ; 285
How to distinguish from the rare the dense.
This best for vines, that golden grain approves,
Ceres, the dense ; the rare Lyaeus loves.
First chuse a spot that's for the purpose fit,
Then dig the solid earth ; and sink a pit ; 290
Next, to its bed th' ejected soil restore,
And press with trampling feet the surface o'er ;
If the mold fail, 'tis light ; that soil inclines
To fatten herds, and swell thy cluster'd vines.
But o'er the pit replenish'd, if the ground 295
Still rise, and in superfluous heaps abound,
O'er the thick glebe let sturdy bullocks toil,
Cleave the compacted clods and sluggish soil.

288. *Dense.*] *Densa* signifies such a soil, as will not easily admit the rain, is easily crack'd and apt to gape, and so let in the sun to the root of the vines, and in a manner to strangle the young plants. This therefore must be a hard or stiff soil ; *rara*, lets the showers quite through, and is apt to be dry'd up with the sun. Therefore this must be a loose soil. See Dr. Martyn, who grounds this interpretation on Julius Graecinus, as he is quoted by Columella.

289. *Chuse.*] It is extremely difficult to make this experiment, which is told with great dignity in the Latin, read gracefully and agreeably in a translation,

The land that's bitter, or with salt imbu'd,
 Too wild for culture, for the plough too rude, 300
 Where apples boast no more their purple hues,
 And drooping Bacchus yields degen'rate juice,
 May thus be known : of twigs a basket twine
 Like that from whence is strain'd the recent wine;
 This with the soil and crystal water fill 305
 Then squeeze the mass, while thro' the twigs distil }
 The big round drops in many a trickling rill ; }
 Soon shall its nature from its taste appear,
 And the wry mouth the bitter juice declare.
 We learn from hence a fat and viscid land ; 310
 It sticks like pitch uncrumbled to the hand ;
 The moister mold a rank luxuriance feeds,
 Of lengthen'd grass, and tall promiscuous weeds ;
 O may be mine no over-fertile plain,
 That shoots too strongly forth its early grain ! 315
 The light and heavy in the balance try,
 The black and other colours strike the eye ;
 Not so the cold ; lo ! there dark ivy spreads,
 Or yews on pitch-trees lift their gloomy heads.
 These rules observ'd, expose the clods to dry, 320
 Bak'd and concocted by the northern sky.
 Trench deep, and turn the soil, before ye place
 The tender vines, a joy-diffusing race ;

309. *Bitter.*] *Amaror* is in the style of Lucretius, and the true reading ; tho' many read *amaro*, making it agree with *sensu*.
 SERVIUS.

311. *It sticks.*] *Ad digitos lentescit habendo*, cannot startle a delicate ear so much as must the translation of that expression from the single circumstance, of a vulgar idea being quite concealed in any dead language.

Fat molds grow mellow by the delver's pains,
By fanning winds and frosts, and cooling rains. 325

But hinds of greater diligence and care,
Two soils, of genius similar prepare,
Left the fond offspring its chang'd mother mourn,
And genial lap whence suddenly 'tis torn :
Thus plants from infancy to strength arrive, 330
And in a kindred soil, transplanted thrive.

Besides their former site they nicely mark,
With sharpen'd knife upon the yielding bark ;
And place them as before they stood inclin'd,
To the hot south, or blustering northern wind : 335
Such is the strength of custom, such appears
The force of habits gain'd in tender years.

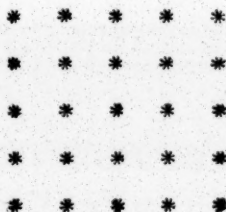
Consider, swain, if best the vine will grow
On the high hill, or in the valley low.
If on rich plains extends thy level ground, 340
Thick set thy plants, and Bacchus will abound ;
If on a gentle hill or sloping bank,
In measur'd squares exact your vineyards rank ;
Each narrow path and equal opening place,
To front, and answer to the crossing space. 345

327.] Columella says the trenches should be dug a year beforehand. Mr. Holdsworth used to say, that Columella's treatise on husbandry was by much the best comment on Virgil's Georgics, that he knew of. SPENCE.

327. *Two soils*] Having explained the several sorts of soil, says Martyn, he proceeds to give some instructions concerning the planting of vines ; and speaks of the trenches to be made to receive the plants out of the nursery ; of taking care that the nursery and the vineyards should have a like soil, and that the plants should be set with the same aspect which they had in the nursery.

As in just ranks, and many an order'd band,
 On some vast plain the Roman legions stand,
 Before the shouting squadrons battle join,
 And earth reflects the dazzling armour's shine,
 Mars sternly stalks each equal front betwixt, 350
 Nor yet the fate of either host is fixt :

346. *As in just ranks.*] Virgil, says Dr. Martyn, does not mean the form of a *Quincunx* in this description, but that you should plant your vines in a square in the following order :



As Virgil compares the disposition of the trees in a vineyard, to an army drawn up in battle array, 'tis evident that he must mean this figure. The Romans usually allowed three foot square for every common soldier to manage his arms, that is, six foot between each, which is a proper distance for the vines in Italy, according to Columella, who says the rows should not be wider than ten feet, nor nearer than four.

349. *And earth reflects.*] *Aere renidenti tellus*, says the original. This expression is borrow'd from Lucretius's, *aere renidescit tellus*. Both these poets seem to have had Euripides in their eye ;

— καταχαλκον απαν

Πεδιον αςχαπης.

Phæniss. ver. 110.

The shining beauties of the clusters of the vines (says Dr. Martyn) is finely represented by the splendor of the brazen arms. I beg for once to dissent from this learned gentleman, and to observe, that this part of the comparison seems too minute, and too much like an Italian conceit, for Virgil to have thought of.

350. *Mars sternly.*] This is the only simile in all this Georgic; the reason of which seems to be, that metaphors and short descriptions, which are so frequent in every part of this Georgic, are of the same nature and use in poetry, as similes.

BENSON.

Ev'n thus, your vines dispos'd at distance due,
Not only strike with joy the gazer's view,
But earth more equal nutriment supplies,
The plants find space to spread, and vigorous rise. 355
Perhaps the depth of trenches you'll demand ;
The vine I dare to plant in shallow land ;
But forest-trees that rear their branches higher,
A deeper mold, and wider room require :
Chief the tall Aesculus, that tow'rs above 360
Each humbler tree, the monarch of the grove ;
High as his head shoots lofty to the skies,
So deep his root in hell's foundation lies ;
While storms and wintry blasts and driving rain
Beat fiercely on his stately top in vain ; 365
Unhurt, unmov'd, he stands in hoary state,
For many an age beyond frail mortals' date,
This way and that, his vast arms widely spread,
He in the midst supports the thick-surrounding shade.
Nor let thy vineyards to the west decline ; 370
Nor hazles plant amid the joyous vine ;
No scions pluck a-top, but near the roots ;
Nor wound with blunted steel the red'ning shoots ;
Nor let wild olives (noxious plants !) be found
Nigh to those spots where luscious grapes abound. 375

370. *To the west decline.*] 'Tis worth observing that the poet has brought together here, more precepts than in any part of all the Georgics ; but it is likewise remarkable, that he has placed them very artfully betwixt that fine passage just mentioned, and another equally beautiful. • BENSON.

For oft from heedless shepherds falls a spark,
 Which lurking first beneath the unctuous bark,
 Seizes the solid tree ; with dreadful roar
 'The flames thro' catching leaves and branches soar,
 Swift thro' the crackling wood triumphant fly, 380
 And hurl the pitchy clouds into the darken'd sky.
 But most they ravage, if the roaring wind
 With doubled rage should rise, with fire combin'd ;
 No vines, hereafter, sow'd, or prun'd, will thrive ;
 'The bitter-leav'd wild olives sole survive. 385
 Let none persuade to plant, in winter hoar,
 When rigid Boreas' spirit blusters frore ;
 Winter the pores of earth so closely binds,
 No passage the too tender fibre finds ;
 'Plant best the vines in blushing spring's fresh bloom, 390
 When the white bird, the dread of snakes is come :
 Or in cool autumn, when the summer's past,
 Ere Phoebus' steeds to the cold tropic haste.

In spring, in blushing spring, the woods resume
 Their leafy honours, and their fragrant bloom ; 395
 Earth swells with moisture all her teeming lands,
 And genial fructifying seed demands ;

376. *Falls a spark.*] This fine description of a fire raging among the vines and their supporters, judiciously relieves the dryness of the Didactic lines preceding.

394. *In spring.*] There are few passages in the Georgics more charming than this description of spring. He strives hard to excell Lucretius, but I am afraid it cannot be said that he has done it. The *conjugis in gremio* is evidently taken from

In gremio matris terræ præcipitavit.

And the following lines of the same writer, to whom Virgil

Almighty Jove descends, more full of life,
 On the warm bosom of his kindling wife ;
 The birds with music fill the pathless groves, 400
 Stung by desire the beasts renew their loves ;
 The buried grain appears, the fields unbind
 Their pregnant bosoms to the western wind ;
 The springing grass to trust this season dares ;
 No tender vine the gathering tempest fears, 405
 By the black north or roaring Auster roll'd,
 But spreads her leaves, and bids her gems unfold.
 Such were the days, the season was the same,
 When first arose this world's all-beauteous frame ;
 The sky was cloudless, balmy was the air, 410
 And spring's mild influence made young nature fair :
 When cattle first o'er new-born mountains spread,
 And man, an iron race, uprear'd his hardy head :
 When beasts thro' pathless brakes began to prowl,
 And glittering stars thro' heav'n's blue concave roll. 415

is indeed infinitely obliged, are very fine ; he is likewise speaking of the genial influence of the spring :

*Hinc laetas urbes pueris florere videmus,
 Frondiferasque novis avibus canere undique sylvas.
 Hinc fessae pecudes pingues per pabula laeta
 Corpora deponunt, & candens lacteus humor
 Uberibus manat discentis ; hinc nova proles
 Artibus infirmis teneras lasciva per herbas
 Ludit lacte mero, mentes percussa novellas.*

404.] The ascribing boldness and fear to trees is highly poetical.

415. *Stars.*] This seems to be oddly put together at first sight. The forests were stock'd with beasts, and the heavens with constellations. It was not so in those times, when the
constellations

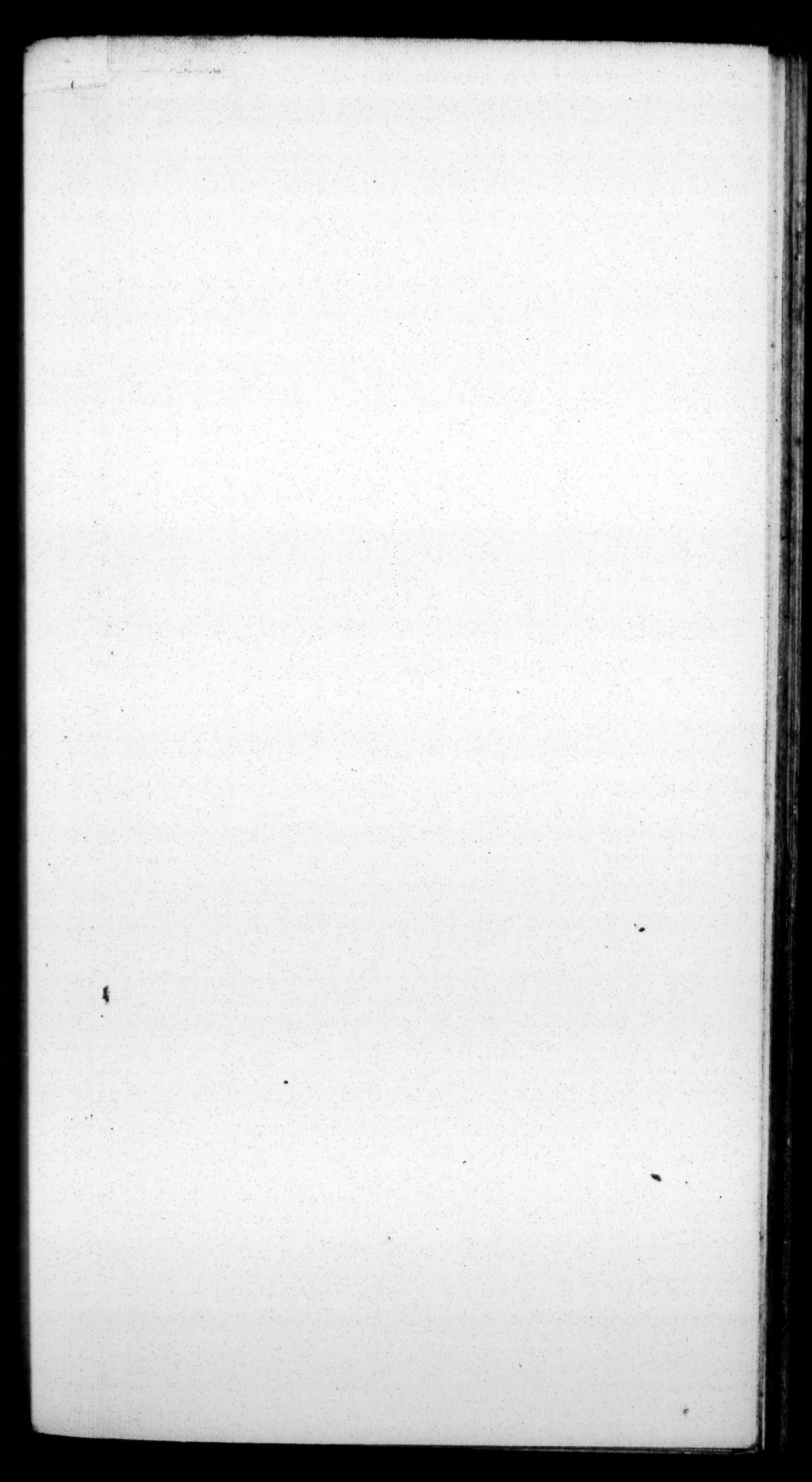
Nor could this infant world sustain th' extremes
Of piercing winter, and hot Sirius' beams,
Did not kind heav'n, the fierce excess between,
Bid gentler spring's soft season intervene.

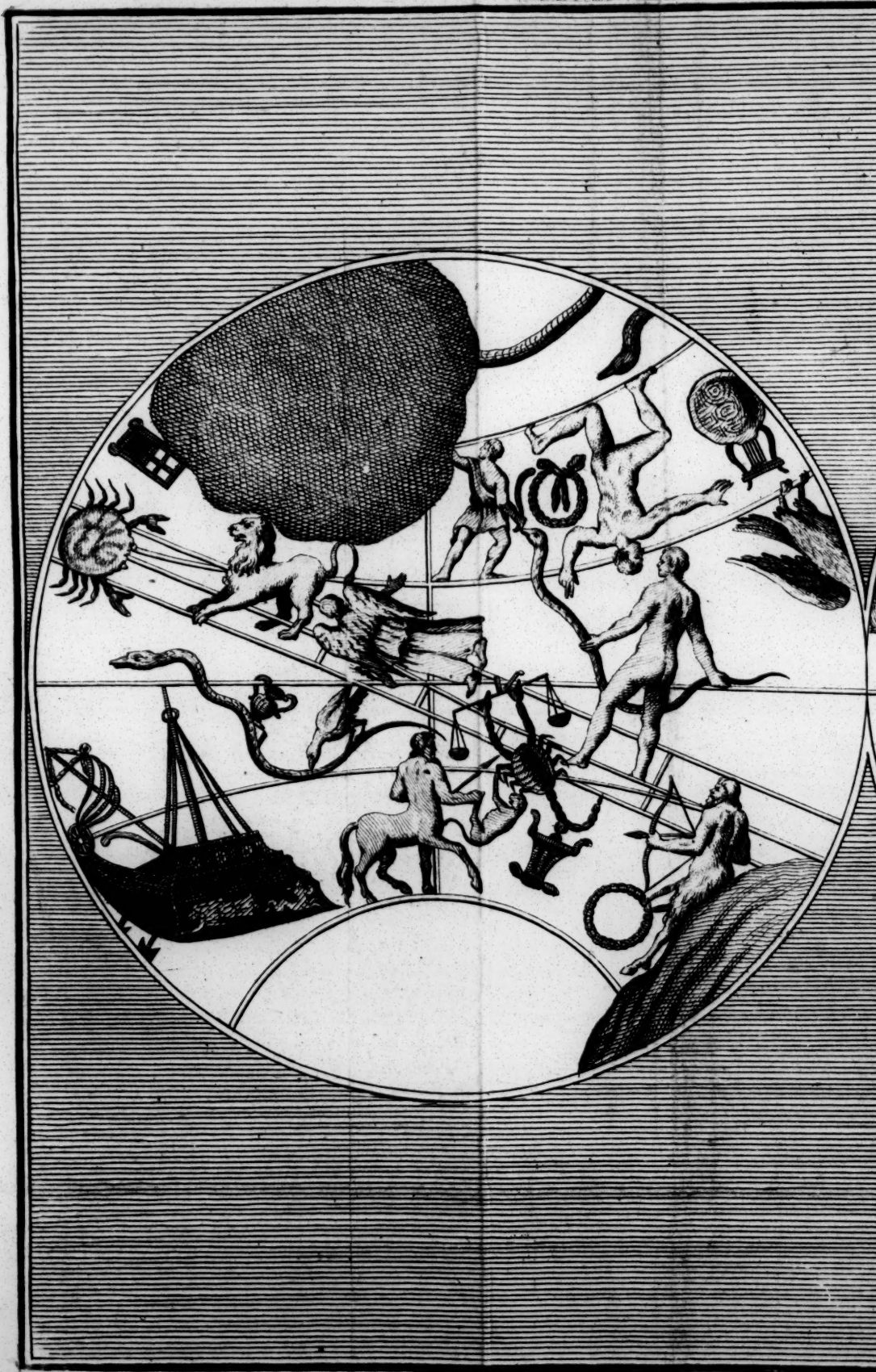
Now, when you bend the layers to the ground 420
Cast fatt'ning dung and copious mold around ;
Or near the roots rough shells and pebbles hide,
Thro' which the fostering rains may gently glide ;
Thro' which may subtle vapours penetrate,
And to large growth the tendrils instigate. 425
There are, with weights of stone who press the roots,
Best safeguard to the plants, and future fruits,
Both in immoderate showers, or summer's heat,
When Sirius' beams on the parcht vineyard beat.
About the roots oft turn the neighb'ring soil, 430
And urge the drag and hough with frequent toil ;
Or introduce thy plough's unwieldy load,
And 'twixt thy vines the struggling bullocks goad.
Then the smooth cane, the forked ash prepare,
Auxiliar pole, and strong supporting spear ; 435

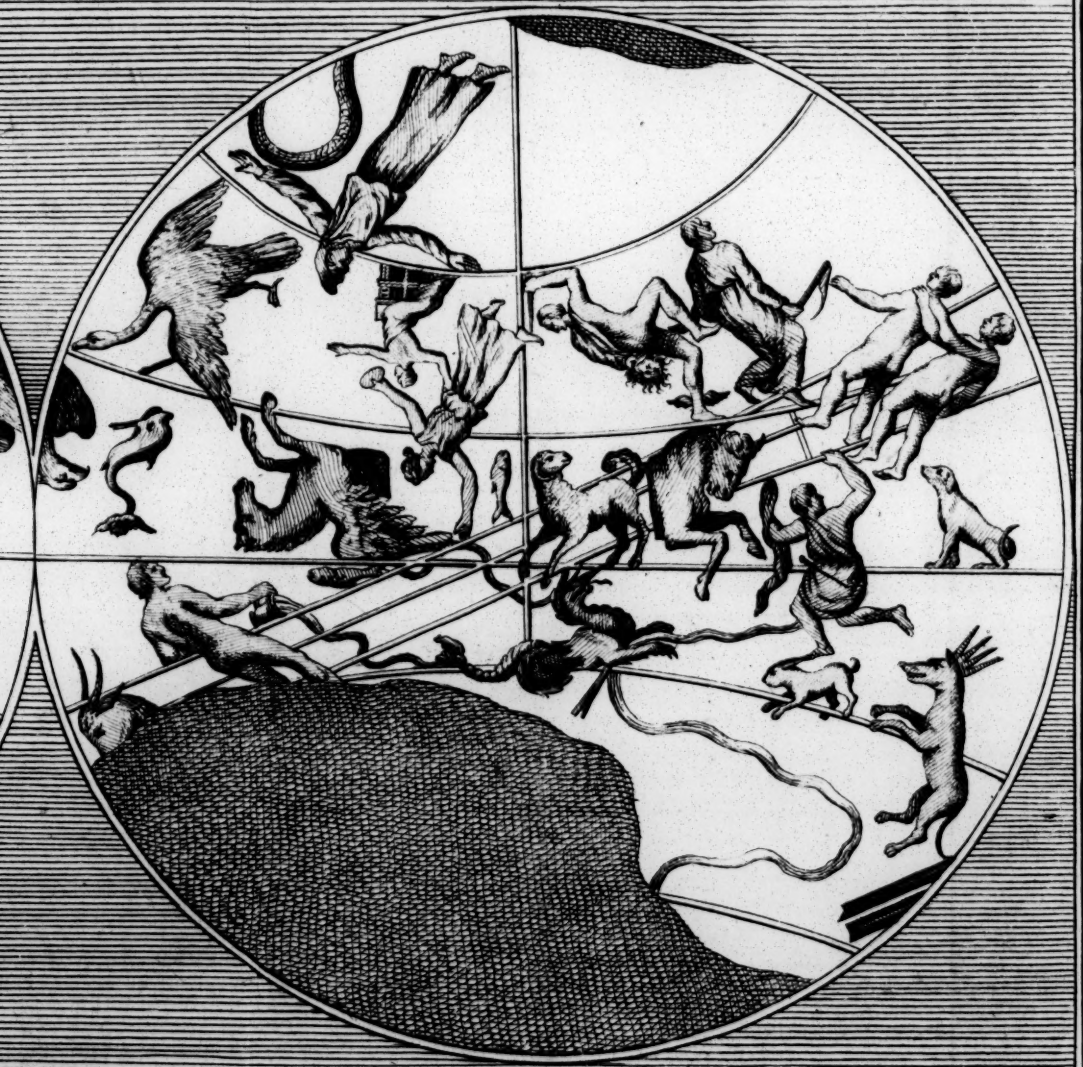
constellations were generally considered as real animals, and many of them as men, but most of them as beasts. The prologue to Plautus his *Rudens* is spoken by *Arcturus*, as one of the *Dramatis Personae*. SPENCE.

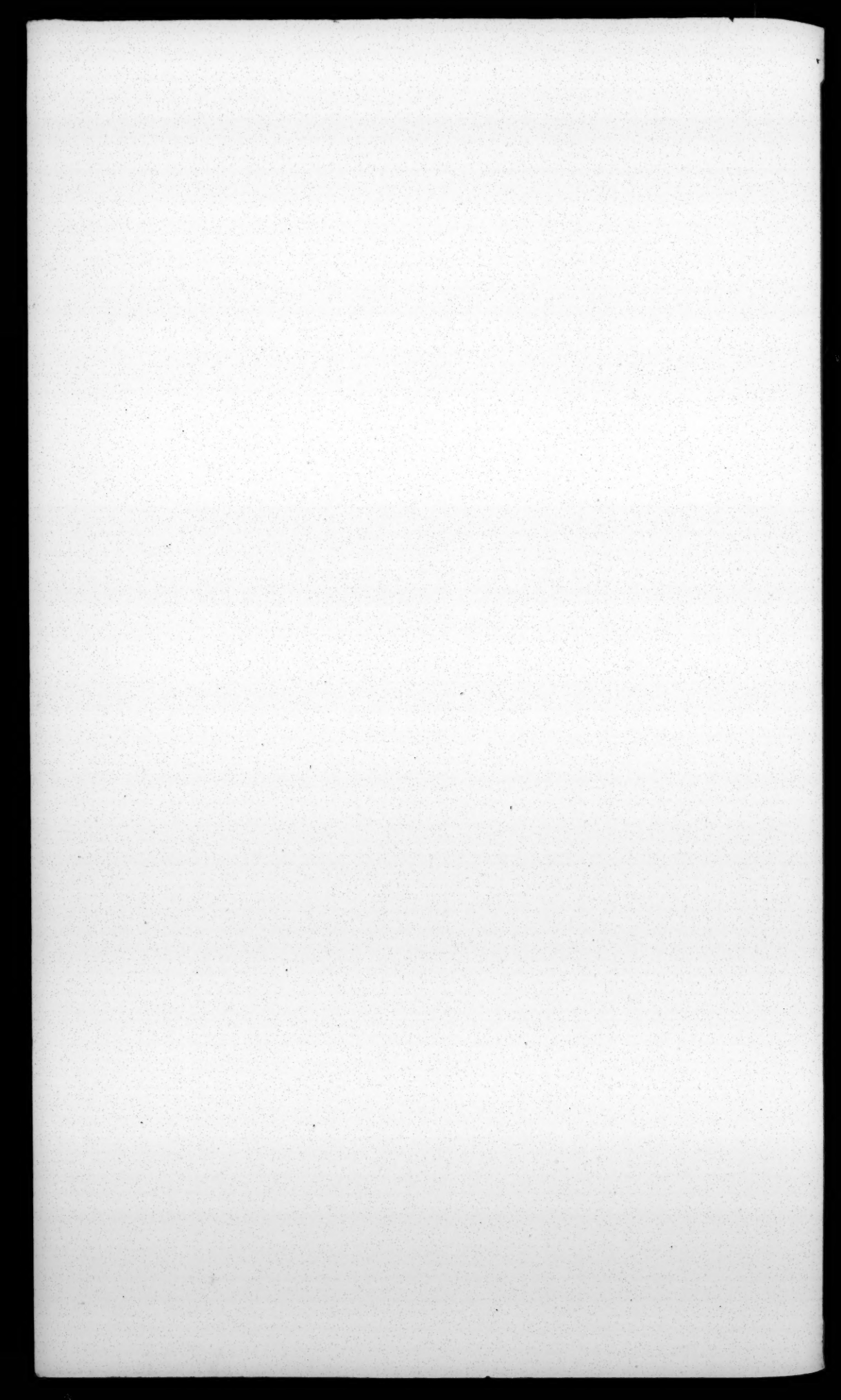
422. *Pebbles hide.*] Mr. Evelyn mentions the placing potsheards, pebbles, or flints near the root of the stem ; but then he adds, remember you remove them after a competent time, else the vermin, snails and insects which they produce and shelter, will gnaw and greatly injure their bark ; and therefore to lay a coat of moist rotten litter with a little earth upon it, will preserve it moist in summer, and warm in winter, enriching the showers and dews that strain thro' it.

EVELYN of Forest Trees.









Assisted thus, the lusty plants despise
 The shattering whirlwinds, and the stormy skies,
 And to the tall elm's top by just gradations rise. }
 The new-born buds, the tender foliage spare;
 The shoots that vigorous dart into the air, 440
 Disdaining bonds, all free, and full of life,
 O dare not wound too soon with sharpen'd knife!
 Insert your bending fingers, gently cull
 The roving shoots, and red'ning branches pull:
 But when they clasp their elms with strong embrace, 445
 Lop the luxuriant boughs, a lawless race;
 Ere this, they dread the steel; now, now, reclaim
 The flowing branches, the bold wand'ers tame.
 Guard, too, from cattle thy new-planted ground,
 And infant-vines that ill can bear a wound: 450
 For not alone by winter's chilling frost,
 Or summer's scorching beam the young are lost;
 But the wild buffaloes and greedy cows,
 And goats and sportive kids the branches browse;
 Not piercing colds, nor Sirius' beams that beat 455
 On the parcht hills, and split their tops with heat,
 So deeply injure, as the nibbling flocks,
 That wound with venom'd teeth the tender, fearful stocks.

436. *Assisted thus.*] The word *tabulata* in the original signifies the branches of elms extended at proper distances to sustain the vines.

440. *Dart into the air.*] The original says, *laxis per purum immissus habenis*; this expression is doubtless extremely bold and strong, but the poet had the authority of his master Lucretius,

Crescendi magnum immissis certamen habenis.

Hence is the goat on Bacchus' altar laid,
 Hence on the lofty stage are fables play'd ; 460
 Th' Athenians first to rival wits decreed,
 In streets and villages the poet's meed ;
 The feast with mirth and foaming goblets kept,
 And on the goat-skin bladders rudely leapt.
 Nor less th' Ausonian swains deriv'd from Troy, 465
 Sport in rough numbers and unwieldly joy ;
 Their hollow vizards scoop from barks of trees,
 And stain their ghastly masks with purple lees ;
 Bacchus, on thee they call, in hymns divine,
 And hang thy statues on the lofty pine : 470
 Hence plenty every laughing vineyard fills,
 Thro' the deep vallies and the sloping hills ;

460. *Hence on the lofty stage.*] The ancient theatre was a semicircular building, appropriated to the acting of plays, the name being derived from *θεαομαι* to behold. It was divided into the following parts. 1. The *porticus*, *scalæ*, *sedilia* ; the rows of *sedilia*, or seats, were called *cunei*, because they were formed like wedges, growing narrower, as they came nearer the center of the theatre ; and these were all disposed about the circumference of the theatre. 2. The orchestra, so called from *ορχησθαι* to dance : it was the inner part, or center of the theatre, and the lowest of all, and hollow, whence the whole open space of the theatre was called *cavea*. Here sat the senators, and here were the dancers and music. 3. The *proscenium*, which was a place drawn from one horn of the theatre to the other, between the orchestra and the scene, being higher than the orchestra, and lower than the scene : here the comic and tragic actors spoke and acted upon an elevated place, which was called the *pulpitum*, or stage. 4. The scene was the opposite part to the audience, decorated with pictures and columns, and originally with trees, to shade the actors, when they performed in the open air. 5. *Proscenium*, or part behind the scenes.

RUAELUS.

Where-e'er the god inclines his lovely face,
 More luscious fruits the rich plantations grace.
 Then let us Bacchus' praises duly sing, 475
 And consecrated cakes, and chargers bring,
 Dragg'd by their horns let victim-goats expire,
 And roast on hazel spits before the sacred fire.

Another toil in dressing vines remains
 Unconquerable still by ceaseless pains ; 480
 Thrice and four times the soil, each rolling year,
 The ponderous ploughs, and heavy drags must bear ;
 Leaves must be thinn'd : still following in a ring
 The months fresh labours to the peasants bring.
 Ev'n when the tree its last pale leaves hath shed, 485
 And Boreas stript the honours of its head,
 To the next year the careful farmers look,
 And form the plant with Saturn's bending hook.
 Dig thou the first, and shoots superfluous burn,
 And homeward first the vineyard's stakes return ; 490

473. *The god.*] Virgil speaks of some little heads of Bacchus, which the countrymen of old hung up on trees, that the face might turn every way ; out of a notion that the regards of this god gave felicity to their vineyards : and Ovid mentions Bacchus's turning his face towards him, as a blessing. The former, in a passage, which is not very easy to be understood of itself ; and for the full understanding of which, I was obliged to a gem in the great Duke's collection at Florence. Virgil on this occasion says, that there is plenty wherever this god turns his beautiful face. Mr. Dryden in his translation of the words, seems to have borrowed his idea of Bacchus from the vulgar representations of him on our sign-posts, and so calls it, [in downright English] *Bacchus's honest face.*

POLYMETIS, page 130.

But, unbetray'd by too impatient haste,
 To reap thy luscious vintage be the last :
 Twice noxious weeds, twice shade, o'er-run the land,
 Whose rank increase requires the pruner's hand.
 To larger vineyards praise or wonder yield, 495
 But cultivate a small and manageable field.
 Nor fail to cut the broom and watery reed,
 And the wild willow of the grassy mead.
 The vines now ty'd with many a strengthening band,
 No more the culture of the knife demand. 500
 Glad for his labour past and long employ,
 At the last rank the dresser sings for joy !
 Yet still must he subdue, still turn the mold,
 And his ripe grapes still fear Jove's piercing cold.
 But happier olives ask nor pains nor care, 505
 When rooted once, they mount into the air,
 Nor harrow's teeth, nor arched knives demand,
 But self-sustain'd, alone, and vigorous, stand.

502. *At the last rank.*] Mr. Benson complains, that he could not find that the word *antes* in the original, was used by any other Roman writer, and says, that he did not know what to make of it. It undoubtedly signifies *ranks* or *files*, and is a metaphor taken from the army. For Cato *de Re Militari*, says, *pedites quatuor agminibus, equites duobus antibus duces*.

505. *But happier olives.*] We are now come to a new scene. Hitherto Virgil has expatiated on the vine ; but now he enters on a very different subject. He has shewn what endless labour the vine requires, and the uncertainty of the product at last. Now, says he, quite contrary to the vine, the olive requires no labour at all, after it is once well settled in the ground. All you need do, is to plough the soil about them, and you may be sure of a crop of olives.

After

If crooked teeth just make her surface loose,
 The earth alone the plants supplies with juice ; 510
 But if more deep thy ploughs unlock the soil,
 From the large berries burst rich floods of oil :
 Then ne'er to raise the fruitful olive cease,
 The plant of Pallas, and the pledge of peace.
 Thus when th' engrafted apples feel their strength, 515
 Their trunks they stretch, and doubled is their length ;
 While swift they dart into the lofty skies,
 Self-nourish'd stand, nor ask from man supplies.
 Nor less wild fruits in pathless forests grow ;
 And haunts of birds with blushing berries glow ; 520
 The cytissus of foodful leaves is shorn,
 And prudence finds an use in ev'ry thorn.
 The pitchy pines afford us heat and light,
 To cheat the tedious gloom of wintry night.
 And can the swain still doubt, and still forbear, 525
 To plant, to dig, and cultivate, with care ?
 Why sing I trees alone, that loftier rise ?
 The lowly broom to cattle, browse supplies ;

After olives, he goes on to fruit trees ; and all the trouble that belongs to them is nothing but ingrafting. Then he proceeds to the wild forest fruits, which require no manner of labour ; afterwards to the cytissus, willows, furze, box, and other plants ; and lastly, he declares the usefulness of old decayed trees.

Thus he makes this work of universal concern. All lands will not bear vines, or corn, or olives ; but every land will bear something or other, and by pointing out the produce of the several kinds of soil, he applies himself to all sorts of country people.

BENSON.

Willows to panting shepherds shade dispense,
 To bees their honey, and to corn defence. 530
 What joy to see Cyturus wave with box,
 And pines nod awful on Narycium's rocks !
 Fields, that ne'er felt or rake or cleaving share,
 Wild above art, disdaining human care !
 Ey'n the rough woods on Caucasus so bleak, 535
 Which ever-roaring whirlwinds bend and break,
 For shipping pines afford, thrice useful trees,
 For houses, cedars and tall cypresses :
 Hence peasants turn their spokes ; hence orb their wheels'
 Hence find for swift-wing'd vessels, crooked keels ; 540
 Elms, foodful leaves ; and twigs, the willows bear ;
 Cornels and myrtles give the martial spear ;
 The yew obedient to the bender's will,
 Forms the strong bows with which the Parthians kill, }
 And limes and polish'd box confess the carver's skill : }
 Down Po's swift torrents the light alders glide, 545
 And bees in hollow oaks their honey hide.
 What gifts like these can Bacchus' fruits bestow ?
 To Bacchus crimes and quarrels, mortals owe ;

541. *Elms, foodful leaves.*] The use of the very leaves of this tree, especially of the female, is not to be despised ; for being suffered to dry in the sun upon the branches, and the spray stripped off about the decrease in August (as also where the suckers and stolones are supernumerary, and hinder the thriving of their nurseries) they will prove a great relief to cattle in winter, and scorching summers ; when hay and fodder is dear they will eat them before oats, and thrive exceedingly well with them.

EVELYN.

He, the fierce Centaurs, Rhoetus, Pholus slew, 550
And Hyleûs who enrag'd, a maffy goblet threw.

Thrice happy fwains ! whom genuine pleasures blefs,
If they but knew and felt their happinefs !
From wars and discord far, and public strife,
Earth with falubrious fruits supports their life : 555
Tho' high-arch'd domes, tho' marble halls they want,
And columns cas'd in gold and elephant,
In aweful ranks where brazen statues stand,
The polish'd works of Grecia's skilful hand ;

550. *The fierce Centaurs.*] This happened at the nuptials of Pirithous, king of the Lapithæ, where a Centaur aided by his brethren, attempted to ravish his bride Hippodamia.

552. *Thrice happy fwains.*] The following description of the pleasures of a country life is celebrated almost to a proverb ; it affords the highest ideas of Virgil's uncorrupt mind, as well as of his poetry. He has assembled here all the most striking and beautiful objects of nature. No contrast was ever worked up more strongly, than this between the city and country life.

553. *Felt their happinefs.*] *Sua si bona norint*, is a tender reproach to the Romans for their insensibility of being delivered, *a discordibus armis*, and restored to the quiet enjoyment of their possessions.

BENSON.

556. *Tho' high-arch'd domes.*] Virgil hath so evidently taken the very turn and manner of expression in these lines from a passage in his master Lucretius, that I cannot forbear inserting it ; and shall leave the reader to judge which of the two is most beautiful.

*Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per aedes,
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut suppeditentur ;
Nec domus argento fulget, auroque renidet :
Attamen inter se prostrati in gramine molli
Propter aquae rivum, sub ramis arboris altae,
Non magnis opibus jucunde corpora curant.*

B. 2. 24.

Nor dazzling palace view, whose portals proud 560
 Each morning vomit out the cringing crowd ;
 Nor wear the tissu'd garment's cumb'rous pride,
 Nor seek soft wool in Syrian purple dy'd,
 Nor with fantastic luxury defile
 The native sweetness of the liquid oil ; 565
 Yet calm content, secure from guilty cares,
 Yet home-felt pleasure, peace, and rest, are theirs,
 Leisure and ease, in groves, and cooling vales,
 Grottoes, and bubbling brooks, and darksome dales ;
 The lowing oxen, and the bleating sheep, 570
 And under branching trees delicious sleep !
 There forests, lawns, and haunts of beasts abound,
 There youth is temperate, and laborious found ;
 There altars and the righteous gods are fear'd,
 And aged fires by duteous sons rever'd. 575
 There Justice linger'd ere she fled mankind,
 And left some traces of her reign behind !
 Take me, ye muses, your devoted priest,
 Whose charms with holy raptures fire my breast !
 Teach me the ways of heav'n, the stars to know, 580
 The radiant sun and moon's eclipses shew,
 Whence trembles earth, what force old ocean swells
 To burst his bounds, and backward what repels ;
 Why wintry suns roll down with rapid flight,
 And whence delay retards the lingering night. 585

588. *Me may the lowly vales.*] Cowley observes upon this passage, that the first wish of Virgil was to be a good philosopher ; the second, a good husbandman ; and God, whom he seemed

But if my blood's cold streams, that feebly flow,
 Forbid my foul great nature's works to know,
 Me may the lowly vales, and woodlands please,
 And winding rivers, and inglorious ease !

O that I wander'd by Sperchius' flood !

590

Or on Taygetus' sacred top I stood !

Who, in cold Haemus' vales my limbs will lay,
 And in the darkest thicket hide from day !

Happy the man, whose vigorous soul can pierce
 Thro' the formation of this universe !

595

seemed to understand better than most of the learned heathens, dealt with him just as he did with Solomon ; because he prayed for wisdom in the first place, he added all things else which were subordinately to be desired. He made him one of the best philosophers, and the best husbandman ; and to adorn and communicate both those faculties, the best poet : he made him besides all this a rich man, and a man who desired to be no richer.

590. *O that I wander'd.*] *O ubi campi*, &c. It cannot possibly be the poet's enquiry where these places are situated, tho' most of the translators take it so ; but it is an ardent wish to be placed in such delightful retreats. Catrou, and the learned M. Huet, bishop of Avranches, read *O ubi Tempe*, instead of *campi*, which is most consistent with the passage.

592. *Haemus.*] The very best of the Roman poets copied so much after the Greeks, that they sometimes give us ideas of things, that would be proper enough for a Greek, but sound quite improper from a Roman. Virgil's and Horace's instancing Thrace, as so very cold a country, is a strong proof of this.—Thrace was full north of Greece, and some of the Greeks therefore might talk of the coldness of that country as strongly, perhaps, as some among us talk of the coldness of Scotland. The Roman writers speak just in the same stile of the coldness of Thrace, tho' a considerable part of Italy lay in as northern a latitude, and some of it even farther north than Thrace.

SPENCE.

594. *Happy the man.*] These noble lines are undoubtedly a compliment

Who nobly dares despise, with soul sedate,
 The din of Acheron, and vulgar fears, and fate.
 And happy too, tho' humbler, is the man,
 Who loves the rural gods, the Nymphs, and Pan :
 Nor power, nor purple pomp his thoughts engage, 600
 Nor courts and kings, nor faithless brother's rage,
 Nor falls of nations, nor affairs of Rome,
 Nor Dacians leagu'd in arms, near rapid Ister's foam ;
 He weeps no wretch's pitiable state,
 Nor looks with pining envy on the great : 605
 The loaded trees, the willing fields afford
 Unpurchas'd banquets for his temperate board ;
 'The noisy people's rage he never saw,
 Nor frauds and cruelties of iron law.
 Some brave the tempests of the roaring main, 610
 Or rush to dangers, toils, and blood for gain ;
 Some ravage lands, or crowded cities burn,
 Nor heed how many helpless widows mourn,

compliment to Lucretius, to whose poem Virgil is much indebted, and whose system must lead him to despise the fears of death and hell : how strongly and poetically is the latter particular expressed by the roaring (din or noise) of the infernal river Acheron.

604. *He weeps no wretch's.*] The meaning of *nec doluit miserans inopem* is not, that he looks on distress and misery with a stoical apathy and indifference, but that there is no body in the country (so happy are they) to be pitied. BENSON and TRAPP. But I fear this interpretation is groundless.

608. *The noisy people's rage.*] The *tabularium* in the original was the place where the publick records were kept at Rome. It was in the temple of Liberty. CATROU.

To satiate mad ambition's wild desire,
 To quaff in gems, or sleep on silks of Tyre : 615
 This, to solicit smiles of kings resorts,
 Deep practis'd in the dark cabals of courts ;
 This, low in earth conceals his ill-got store,
 Hov'ring and brooding on his useless ore ;
 This, doats with fondness on the rostrum's fame, 620
 To gain the prize of eloquence, his aim :
 The people's and patrician's loud applause,
 To crowded theatres, another draws ;
 Some shed a brother's blood, and trembling run
 To distant lands, beneath another sun ; 625
 Condemn'd in hopeless exile far to roam
 From their sweet country, and their sacred home.
 The happier peasant yearly ploughs the plains,
 His country hence, his household hence sustains;
 His milky droves, his much-deserving steers, 630
 Each season brings him, in the circling years,
 Or blushing apples, or increase of kine,
 Or bursts his barns with Ceres' gifts divine :
 Prest are his Sicion olives in the mills,
 His swine with fat'ning mast the forest fills, 635
 In winter wild : and yellow autumn crowns
 With various fruits his farms and smiling grounds,

615. *To quaff in gems.*] The Romans carried luxury so far, as to procure large drinking cups made of *one* entire gem. See instances of this kind in Pliny's natural history. *Focula myrrhina* were common among them. Tyre was anciently called *Sarra*, hence *Sarrano ostro*.

While every rocky mountain's sunny side
 The melting grapes with livid ripeness hide.
 He feels the father's and the husband's bliss, 640
 His infants climb, and struggle for a kiss;
 His modest house strict chastity maintains,
 No breach of marriage-vows his nuptials stains;
 Fat are the kine, with milk o'erflow his pails,
 His kids in sportive battles skim the vales : 645
 The jocund master keeps the solemn days,
 To thee, great Bacchus, due libations pays;
 Around the chearful hearth unbends his soul,
 And crowns amid his friends the flowing bowl;
 Distributes prizes to the strong-nerv'd swains, 650
 Who best can dart or wrestle on the plains.
 The frugal Sabines thus their acres till'd,
 Thus Remus and his brother lov'd the field :
 The Tuscans to these arts their greatness owe,
 'Twas hence majestic Rome began to grow, 655 }
 Rome, noblest object of the things below ;

641. *His infants.*] *Pendent circum oscula*, hang about his kisses, is an image most poetical and well expressed; but would not bear a literal translation. The passage in Lucretius, from whom this is imitated, has an image still more tender and natural.—He says,—*nec dulces occurrunt oscula nati præripere*,—which last word, representing the children running out to meet their father, and striving which shall have the first kiss is very beautiful.

652. *The frugal Sabines.*] To raise the praises of the country life still higher, he tells us, that this was the life their glorious ancestors, and the first founders of their city were so fond of. *Virum bonum cum laudabant, ita laudabant bonum agricolam bonum colonum.* *Amplissimè laudari existimabatur qui ita laudabatur*, says the venerable-old Cato.

Who, while the subject earth with wonder fills,
 Hath, single, deck'd with towers her seven hills.
 Ere Cretan Jove a scepter sway'd, before
 Man dar'd to spill the useful bullock's gore, 660
 Such was the peaceful life old Saturn led,
 Such was the golden age, from guilt secure and dread!
 Ere the loud trumpet sounded dire alarms,
 Or impious swords were forg'd, and clattering arms.

654. *Tuscan.*] He mentions Etruria in compliment to Maecenas, who was descended from the ancient kings of Tuscany. *Tyrrhena regum progenies, &c.* HOR.

660. *Useful bullock's gore.*] Varro informs us, that in ancient times it was deemed a capital crime to kill an ox; *Hic socius hominum in rustico opere, et Cereris minister. Ab hoc, antiqui manus ita abstinere voluerunt, ut capite sanxerit, si quis occidisset.* I could not forbear quoting this passage for its great humanity.

661 *Old Saturn led.*] An author, whose elegance and clearness and chastity of style and thought approaches nearest to that of Virgil, of any in the Augustan age, and who deserves to be more universally read than he is at present, thus describes the reign of Saturn: a subject which all the poets of that time have touched on.

*Quam bene Saturno vivebant rege, priusquam
 Tellus in longas est patefacta vias.*

*Nondum cœruleas pinus contempserat undas,
 Effusum ventis præbueratque sinum.*

*Nec vagus ignotis repetens compendia terris
 Presserat externa navita merce ratem.*

Illo non validus subiit juga tempore taurus,

Non domito frænos ore momordit equus.

Non domus ulla fores habuit, non fixus in agris,

Qui regeret certis finibus arva, lapis.

Ipsæ molla dabant quercus, ultroque ferebant

Obvia securis ubera laetis oves.

Non acies, non ira fuit, non bella; neque enses

Immiti sævus duxerat arte faber.

TIBULL. Lib. 1. El. 3. ver. 35.

664. *Impious swords.*] Upon naming the sword, the poet
 seems

But we have pass'd a broad and boundless plain, 665
'Tis time the smoaking courfers to unrein,

seems to start, as if all the miseries of the civil war were
brought afresh to his sight, and instantly concludes.

BENSON.

The End of the Second GEORGIC.

T H E
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.

B O O K the Third.

A R G U M E N T.

The exordium of this book is particularly pompous and elevated. The precepts of our poet concerning the breeding of cattle, the subject of this book, are divided into four parts. I. Of the best methods of breeding cows and horses, with rules to distinguish the best breeds of each. II. Of sheep and goats. III. Of dogs. IV. Of things that are pernicious to cattle; particularly serpents, vipers, scabs, the murrain, fevers, and the plague; with a moving and sublime description of which last, this book concludes. The descriptions and digressions in the book are more frequent than in any of the rest. Such is, the description of the chariot-race; of the insect Asilus; of the loves of the beasts; and the Scythian winter.

T H E
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.

B O O K the Third.

THY praises too, great Pales, will we sing,
 With thee fam'd shepherd of Amphryfus' spring;
 Ye too, Lycaeus' groves, and gushing streams,
 For vain are ancient tales, and vulgar themes;
 Who knows not all the songs that once cou'd please, 5
 Busiris' shrines, Eurystheus' dire decrees?
 Can Dian's isle, or Hylas, longer charm?
 Or Pelops famous for his ivory arm,

Ver. 1. *Thy praises, too, great Pales.*] This is the book which appears to me the most charming of all the Georgics. Mr. Addison's favourite is the fourth, which indeed is more sweet and elegant, but the beauties of this are more great more manly and sublime. He invokes Pales as the goddess of shepherds, and Apollo who fed the herds of king Admetus on the banks of the river Amphryfus.

5. *Who knows not all the songs.*] Virgil here strongly ridicules the trite and fabulous subjects of the Grecian poets. 'Tis ingeniously conjectured by Fulvius Ursinus, that he alludes to particular

Whose steeds victorious in the dusty race
 Won him the fair Hippodame's embrace ? 10
 I too must find a path untrod before,
 And far from groveling earth, to fame sublimely soar.
 I first of Romans to th' Hesperian plain,
 Will lead th' Aonian nymphs, if life remain :
 I first will bid Idumes' palms arise, 15
 Exchange their soil, and bloom in Mantuan skies.
 These hands a fane of Parian stone shall build,
 Where Mincio's stream bedews the verdant field ;
 And spreading wide his ling'ring waters, feeds
 Around his winding shores the tender reeds ; 20

particular authors who had treated of the fabulous stories he mentions. Thus Homer has related the fable of Eurytheus in the eighteenth Iliad. Athenaeus quotes the Busiris of Mnesimachus in his ninth book. Theocritus and Apollonius finely relate the story of Hylas and Hercules his grief for his loss. Callimachus is referred to in *Latonia Delos*, and the first Olympic ode of Pindar is to be understood by the mention of Hippodamia and Pelops. He breaks out at last into a noble triumph of assurance, that he shall rival these Greek poets :

*Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
 Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.*

Mr. Pope used to say, that this triumph of Virgil over the Greek poets, was one of the vainest things that ever was writ. — But surely its sublimity makes amends for this imputed vanity.

19. *Spreading wide his ling'ring waters.*] This description of the Mincio is as exact as possible ; the force of it lies chiefly in the epithets, *tardis, ingens* — the wide spreading and almost stagnation of the river, which forms the lake of Mantua.

17. *These hands.*] Mr. Hurd in his notes on Horace's Epistle to Augustus, hath discoursed so entertainingly on the introductory

In the mid dome shall Cæsar's form divine
Superior stand the godhead of the shrine.

introductory lines of this third book, that it was thought proper to insert the following extract from that judicious work.

On the idea of the Apotheosis, which was the usual mode of flattery in the Augustan age, but, as having the countenance of public authority, sometimes inartificially enough employed, Virgil hath projected one of the noblest allegories in ancient poetry, and at the same time hath given to it all the force of *just* compliment, the *occasion* itself allowed. *Each* of these excellencies was to be expected from his talents. For as his genius led him to the *sublime*; so his exquisite judgment would instruct him to palliate this bold fiction, and qualify as much as possible, the shocking adulation, implied in it. So singular a beauty deserves to be shewn at large.

The *third* GEORGIC sets out with an apology for the low and simple argument of that work, which yet the poet esteemed, for its novelty, preferable to the sublimer, but trite, themes of the Greek writers. Not but he intended, on some future occasion, to adorn a nobler subject. This was the great plan of the *Aeneis*, which he now *prefigures* and unfolds at large. For, taking advantage of the noblest privilege of his *art*, he breaks away, in a fit of *prophetic* enthusiasm, to predict his successes in this projected enterprize, and under the imagery of the ancient *triumph*, which comprehends or suggests to the imagination, whatever is most august in human affairs, to delineate the future glories of this ambitious design. The whole conception, as we shall see, is of the utmost grandeur and magnificence; tho', according to the usual management of the poet (which as not being apprehended by his critics, hath furnished occasion even to the best of them to charge him with a want of the *sublime*) he hath contrived to soften and *familiarize* its appearance to the reader; by the artful manner, in which it is introduced. It stands thus:

*Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim
Tollere humo, VICTORQUE virum volitare per ora.*

The idea of *victory*, thus casually dropped, he makes the basis of his imagery; which, by means of this gradual preparation,

For him, myself to grace the solemn feast,
Chief of the sports, in Tyrian purple drest,

paration, offers itself easily to the apprehension, though it thereby loses, as the poet designed it should, much of that *broad glare*, in which writers of less judgment love to shew their ideas, as tending to set the common reader at a gaze. The allegory then proceeds :

*Primus ego in patriam mecum (modo vita superfit)
Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas.*

The projected conquest was no less than that of all the *Grecian Muses* at once ; whom, to carry on the decorum of the allegory, he threatens, 1. to force from their high and advantageous situation on the summit of the *Aonian Mount* ; and 2. to bring *captive* with him into Italy ; the former circumstance intimating to us the difficulty and danger of the enterprise ; and the latter, his complete execution of it.

The *palmy*, triumphal entry, which was usual to victors on their return from foreign successes, follows :

Primus Idumaeas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas.

But ancient conquerors did not hold it sufficient to reap this transient fruit of their labours. They were ambitious to consecrate their glory to immortality, by a *temple*, or other public monument, which was to be built out of the spoils of the conquered cities or countries. This the reader sees is suitable to the idea of the great work proposed ; which was, out of the old remains of Grecian art, to compose a *new* one that should comprize the virtues of all of them : as, in fact, the *Aeneid* is known to unite in itself whatever is most excellent not in Homer only, but, universally, in the wits of Greece. The everlasting monument of the *marble temple* is then reared :

Et viridi in campo templum de MARMORE ponam.

And, because ancient superstition usually preferred, for these purposes, the banks of *rivers* to other situations, therefore the poet, in beautiful allusion to the site of some of the most celebrated pagan temples, builds *his* on the *MINCIUS*. We
see

Will lash an hundred cars, like chiefs of yore, 25
By four-yok'd horses whirl'd along the founding shore.

see with what a scrupulous propriety the allusion is carried on.

*Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
MINCIUS, et tenera praetexit arundine ripas.*

Next, this temple was to be dedicated, as a monument of the victor's *piety*, as well as glory, to some propitious, tutelary deity, under whose auspices the great adventure had been achieved. The *dedication* is then made to the poet's *divinity*, Augustus :

In medio mihi CAESAR erit, templumque tenebit.

TEMPLUM TENEBIT. The expression is emphatical ; as intimating to us, and prefiguring the secret purpose of the *Aeneis*, which was, in the person of Aeneas, to shadow forth and consecrate the character of Augustus. His divinity was to fill and *occupy* that great work. And the ample circuit and magnificence of the epic plan was projected only, as a more awful enclosure of that august presence, which was to *inhabit* and solemnize the vast round of this poetic building.

And now the wonderful address of the poet's artifice appears. The mad fervility of his country had *deified* the emperor in good earnest : and his brother poets made no scruple to *worship* in his temples, and to come before him with handfuls of *real* incense, smoking from the altars. But the sobriety of Virgil's adoration was of another cast. He seizes this circumstance only to *embody* a poetical fiction ; which, on the supposition of an actual *deification*, hath all the force of compliment, which the *fact* implies, and yet, as presented through the chaste veil of allegory, eludes the monstrous offence, which the *naked* recital must needs have given to decency and common sense. Had the emperor's *popular* divinity been flatly acknowledged, and adored, the praise, even under Virgil's management, had been insufferable for its extravagance ; and without some support for his poetical *numen* to rest upon, the figure had been more forced and strained, than the rules of just writing allow. As it is, the historical truth of his *apotheosis* authorizes and supports the *fiction*, and the fiction in its turn, serves to refine and palliate the *history*.

The

All Greece shall leave her seats of ancient fame,
To try on Roman ground, th' heroic game ;

The *Aeneis* being, by the poet's improvement of this circumstance, thus naturally predicted under the image of a temple, we may expect to find a close and studied analogy betwixt them. The great, component parts of the *one*, will no doubt, be made, very faithfully, to represent and adumbrate those of the *other*. This hath been executed with great art and diligence.

1. The temple, we observed, was erected on the banks of a river. This site was not only proper for the reason already mentioned, but also, for the further convenience of instituting *publick games*, the ordinary attendants of the *consecration* of temples. These were generally, as in the case of the Olympic and others, celebrated on the banks of rivers.

*Ille victor ego, et Tyrio conspectus in ostro,
Centum quadrijugos agitabo ad flumina currus.
Cuncta mihi, Alpheum linquens lucosque Molochi,
Curfibus et crudo decernet Gracia caestu.*

To see the propriety of the *figure* in this place, the reader needs only be reminded of the *book of games* in the *Aeneid*, which was purposely introduced in honour of the emperor, and not, as is commonly thought, for a mere trial of skill between the poet and his master. The emperor was passionately fond of these sports, and was even the author, or restorer of *one* of them. It is not to be doubted, that he alludes also to the *quinquennial games*, actually celebrated, in honour of his temples, through many parts of the empire. And this the poet undertakes in the *civil* office of VICTOR.

2. What follows is in the *religious* office of PRIEST. For it is to be noted, that, in assuming this double character, which the decorum of the solemnities, here recounted, prescribed, the poet has an eye to the *political* design of the *Aeneis*, which was to do honour to Caesar, in either capacity of a *civil* and *religious* personage ; both being essential to the idea of the perfect legislator, he was to adorn and recommend.

With manly arm the weighty gauntlet wield,
Or lightly skim with winged feet the field :

30

commend. The account of his *sacerdotal functions* is delivered in these words :

*Ipse caput tonsae foliis ornatus olivae
Dona jeram. Jam nunc solemnes ducere pompas
Ad delubra juvat, caesosque videre juvencos ;
Vel scena ut versis discedat frontibus, utque
Purpurea intexti tollant aulaea Britanni.*

The imagery in this place cannot be understood, without reflecting on the customary form and disposition of the pagan temples. DELUBRUM, or DELUBRA, for either *number* is used indifferently, denotes the shrine, or sanctuary, wherein the statue of the presiding God was placed. This was in the center of the building. Exactly before the *delubrum*, and at no great distance from it, was the ALTAR. Further, the shrine, or *delubrum*, was inclosed, and shut up on all sides by *doors* of curious carved work, and ductile *veils*, embellish'd by the rich embroidery of *flowers, animals, or human figures*. This being observed, the progress of the imagery before us will be this. The procession *ad delubra*, or shrine: the sacrifice on the *altars*, erected before it: and, lastly, the painted, or rather wrought *scenery* of the purple *veils*, inclosing the image, which were ornamented, and seemed to be sustained or held up by the figures of *inwoven Britons*. The meaning of all which, is, that the poet would proceed to the celebration of Caesar's praise in all the gradual, solemn preparation of poetic pomp: that he would render the most grateful *offerings* to his divinity in those occasional *episodes*, which he should consecrate to his more immediate honour; and finally, that he would provide the richest texture of his fancy, for a covering to that admired *image* of his virtues, which was to make the sovereign pride and glory of his poem. The choice of the *inwoven Britons*, for the support of his *veil*, is well accounted for by those, who tell us, that Augustus was proud to have a number of these to serve about him in quality of slaves.

The ornaments of the DOORS of this *delubrum*, on which
the

While I, my brows with olive-chaplet bound,
The meed of each victorious toil propound.

the sculptor used to lavish all the riches of his *art*, are next delineated.

*In foribus pugnam ex auro solidoque elephanto
Gangaridum faciam, victorisque arma Quirini;
Atque hic undantem bello, magnumque fluentem
Nilum, ac navali surgentes aere columnas.
Addam urbes Asiae domitas, pulsumque Nipbaten,
Fidentemque fuga Parthum versisque sagittis;
Et duo raptam manu diverso ex hoste trophaea,
Bisque triumphatas utroque ex littore gentes.*

Here the covering of the figure is too thin to hide the *literal* meaning from the commonest reader, who sees, that the several triumphs of Caesar, here recorded in *sculpture*, are those, which the poet hath taken so much pains to *finish*, and hath occasionally inserted, as it were, in *miniature*, in several places of his *poem*. Let him only turn to the prophetic speech of Anchises' shade in the VIth, and to the description of the shield in the VIIIth book.

Hitherto we have contemplated the decorations of the *shrine*, i. e. such as bear a more direct and immediate reference to the honour of Caesar. We are now presented with a view of the remote surrounding ornaments of the temple. These are the illustrious Trojan chiefs, whose story was to furnish the materials, or, more properly, to form the body and case, as it were, of this august structure. They are also connected with the idol deity of the place by the closest ties of relationship, the Julian family affecting to derive its pedigree from this proud original. The poet then, in his arrangement of these additional figures, with admirable judgment, completes and rounds the entire fiction.

*Stabant & Parii lapides, spirantia signa,
Assaraci proles, demissaeque ab Jove gentis
Nomina: Troesque parens & Troesque Cyntius auctor.*

Nothing now remains but for *fame* to eternize the glories of what the great architect had, at the expence of so much art and labour, completed; which is predicted, in the highest sublime

Ev'n now I seem the stately pomp to lead,
Now, now, beneath my steel the victims bleed :

sublime of ancient poetry, under the idea of ENVY, whom the poet personalizes, shuddering at the view of such transcendent perfection ; and tasting, beforehand, the pains of a remediless vexation, strongly pictured in the image of the worst, infernal tortures.

INVIDIA infelix furias amnemque severum
Cocyti metuët, tortosque Ixionis angues,
Immanemque rotam, non exsuperabile saxum.

Thus have I presumed, but with a religious awe, to inspect and declare the mysteries of this ideal temple. The attempt after all might have been censured, as prophane, if the great *Mythagogue* himself, or some body for him †, had not given

† In these lines,

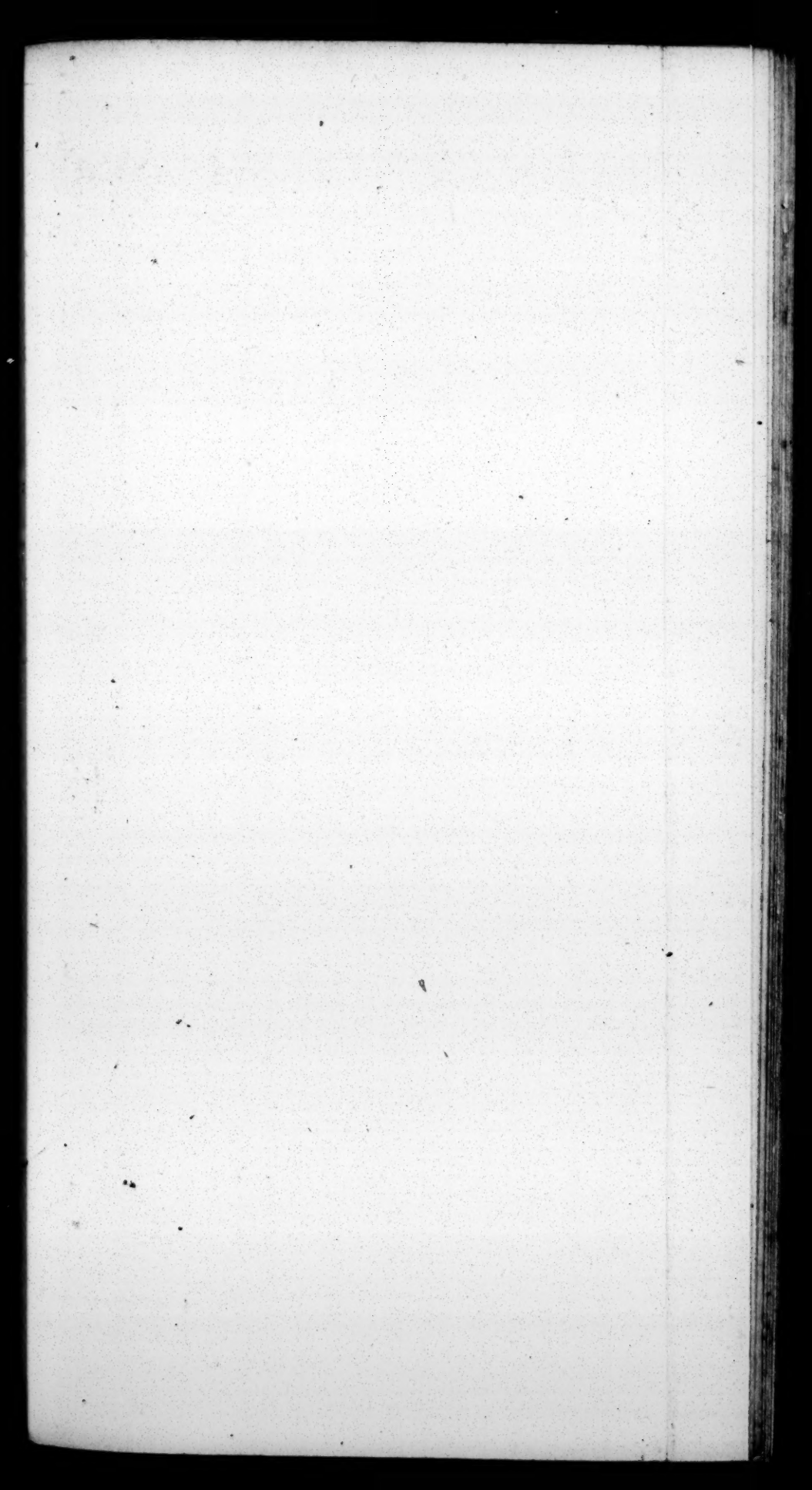
*Mox tamen arduas accingar dicere pugnas
Caesaris, & nomen fama tot ferre per annos,
Tiboni prima quot abest ab origine Caesar.*

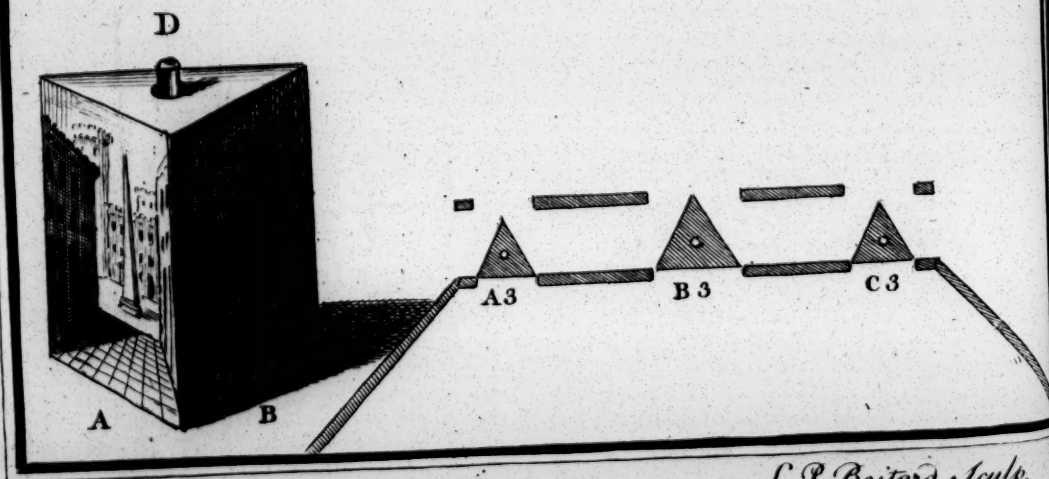
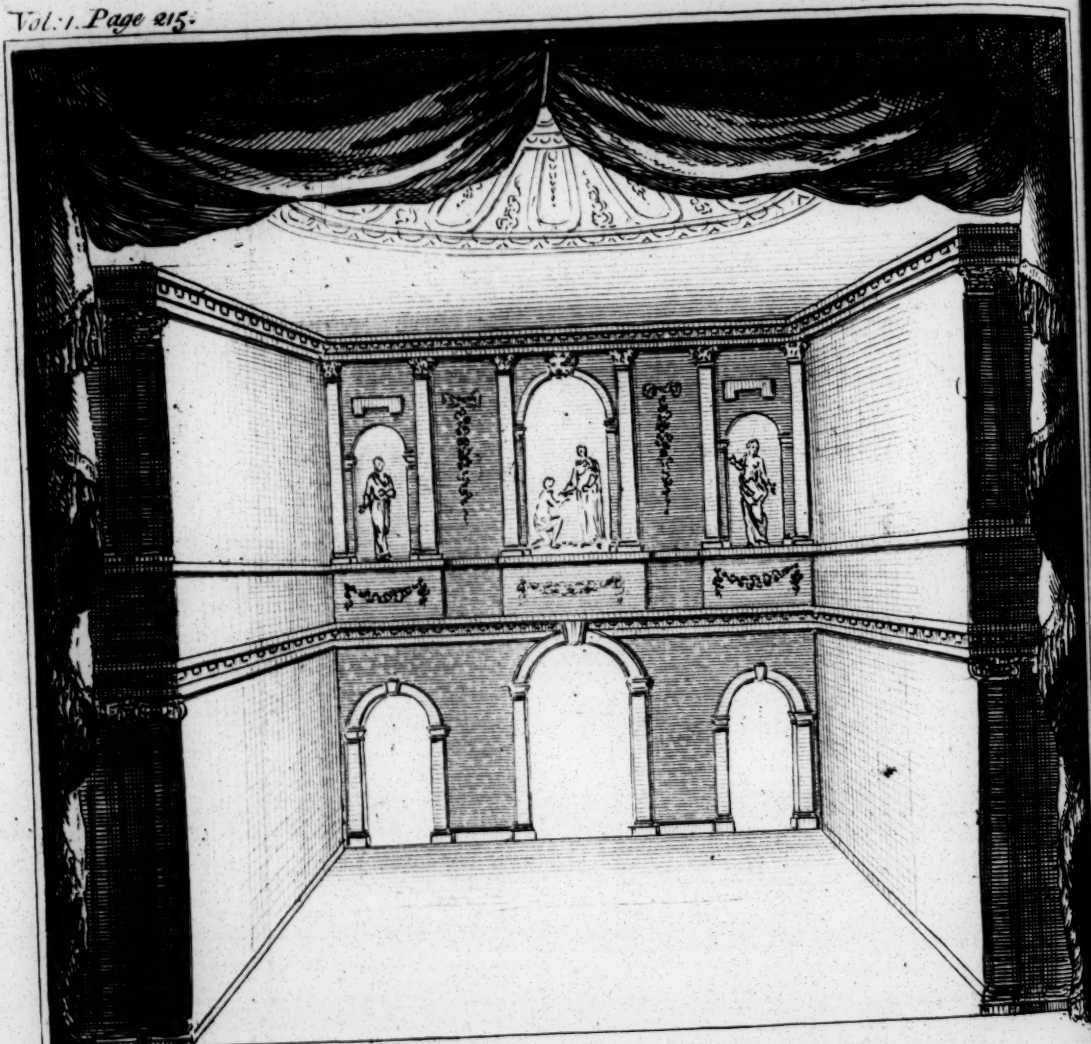
Which I suspect not to have been from the hand of Virgil. And,

1. On account of some *peculiarities in the expression*.

Accingar is of frequent use in the best authors, to denote a *readiness and resolution to do any thing* ; but as joined with an *infinitive mood*, *accingar dicere*, I do not remember to have ever seen it. 'Tis often used by Virgil, but, if the several places be consulted, it will always be found with an *accusative* and *preposition*, expressed or understood, as *magicas accingier artes*, or with an *accusative* and *dative*, as *accingere se praedae*, or lastly with an *ablative*, expressing the *instrument*, as *accingor ferro*. La Cerda, in his notes upon the place, seemed sensible of the objection, and therefore wrote, *Graeca locutio* : the common, but paltry, shift of learned critics, when they determine, at any rate, to support an ancient reading.

2. *Ardentes pugnas*, *burning battles*, sounds well enough to a modern ear, but I much doubt, if it would have passed in the times of Virgil. At least, I recollect no such expression
in





L. J. Bepitard Sculp.

I see the turning scene swift change its face,
The pictur'd Britons in the curtains trace,
Which seem to lift the tapestry they grace.

35 }

given us the undoubted key to it. Under this encouragement
I could not withstand the temptation of disclosing thus much
of

in all his works; *ardens* being constantly joined to a word, denoting a *substance* of apparent *light, heat, or flame*, to which the allusion is easy, as *ardentes gladios, ardentis oculos, campos armis sublimibus ardentis*, and by an easy metaphor, *ardentes bosles*, but no where, that I can find, to so abstract a notion, as that of *fight*. It seems to be to avoid this difficulty, that some have chosen to read *ardentis*, in the *genitive*, which yet Servius rejects as of no authority.

3. But the most glaring note of illegitimacy is in the line,
Titboni prima quæst abest ab origine Caesar.

It has puzzled all the commentators from old Servius down to Mr. Martyn, to give any tolerable account of the poet's choice of *Titbonus*, from whom to derive the ancestry of Augustus, rather than *Anchises*, or *Assaracus*, who were not only more famous, but in the *direct* line. The pretences of any or all of them are too frivolous to make it necessary to spend a thought about them. The instance stands single in antiquity; much less is there any thing like it to be found in the Augustan poets.

II. But the *phraseology* of these lines is the least of my objection. Were it ever so accurate, there is, besides, on the first view, a manifest absurdity in the *subject-matter* of them. For would any writer, of but common skill in the art of composition, close a long and elaborate allegory, the principal grace of which consists in its very mystery, with a cold, and formal explanation of it? Or would he pay so poor a compliment to his patron, as to suppose his sagacity wanted the assistance of this additional triplet to lead him into the true meaning? Nothing can be more abhorrent from the usual address and artifice of Virgil's manner. Or,

III. Were the *subject-matter* itself passable, yet, how, in defiance of all the laws of *disposition*, came it be *forced* in here? Let the reader turn to the passage, and he will soon perceive, that this could never be the *place* for it. The allegory being concluded,

High on the gates, the fell Gangarian fight
In gold and ivory wrought, shall strike the fight.

of one of the noblest fictions of antiquity ; and the rather, as the propriety of allegoric composition, which made the distinguished

cluded, the poet returns to his subject, which is proposed in the six following lines :

*Interea Dryadum sylvas, saltusque sequamur
Intactos, tua, Maecenas, haud mollia iussa ;
Te sine nil altum mens inchoat : en age segnes
Rumpe moras : vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron,
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus equorum,
Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata remugit.*

Would now any one expect, that the poet, after having conducted the reader thus respectfully, to the very threshold of his subject, should immediately run away again to the point, from which he had set out, and this on so needless an errand, as the letting him into the secret of his allegory ?

But this inserted triplet agrees as ill with what follows, as with what precedes it. For how abrupt is the transition, and unlike the delicate connection, so studiously contrived by the Augustan poets, from

Tithoni prima quot abest ab origine Caesar,
to

Seu quis Olympiacae miratur praemia palmae, &c.

When omit but these interpolated lines, and see how gracefully, and by how natural a succession of ideas, the poet slides into the main of his subject.—

*Interea Dryadum sylvas saltusque sequamur
Intactos——*

Te sine nil——

*Rumpe moras : vocat ingenti clamore Cithaeron
Taygetique canes, domitrixque Epidaurus EQUORUM,
Et vox assensu nemorum ingeminata REMUGIT.*

*Seu quis Olympiacae miratus praemia palmae
Pascit EQUOS ; seu quis fortes ad aratra JUVENCOS.*

On the whole, I have not the least doubt, that the lines before us are the spurious offspring of some later poet ; if indeed the writer of them deserve that name ; for, whoever he was, he

Here swoln with war, majestic Nile shall pass, 40
And the tall columns rise in naval bras :

Atinguished pride of ancient poetry, seems but little known or attended to by *modern* professors of this fine art.

he is so far from partaking of the original spirit of Virgil, that at most, he appears to have been but a servile and paltry mimic of Ovid ; from the opening of whose *Metamorphosis* the design was clearly taken. The turn of the thought is evidently the same in both, and even the *expression*. *Mutatas dicere formas* is echoed by *ardentes dicere pugnas : dicere fert animus*, is, by an affected improvement, *accingar dicere* : and *Tiboni prima ab origini* is almost literally the same as *primaque ab origine mundi*. For the *insertion* of these lines in this place I leave it to the curious to conjecture of it, as they may ; but in the mean time, must esteem the office of the true *critic* to be so far resembling that of the *poet* himself, as within some proper limitations, to justify the *honest* liberty here taken.

*Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti ;
Audebit quaecunque parum splendoris habebunt
Et sine pondere erunt, & honore indigna feruntur,*
VERBA MOVERE LOCO ; QUAMVIS INVITA RECEDANT,
ET VERSENER ADHUC INTRA PENETRALIA VESTAE.
[2 Ep. ii. 110.]

35 *I see the turning scene.*] The commentators seem not sufficiently to have explained the expression of, *ut versis discedat frontibus* in the original. The ancient scenes were painted on a triangular machine, mark'd in the plate, D ; which was so formed as to turn upon an axle or pin ; each of its three sides, mark'd in the ground-plan of the plate, 1. 2. 3. represented a different subject ; viz. 1. a city. 2. a palace or magnificent portico. 3. a wild forest, cave, or meadow. When a comedy was play'd, the first of these three frontispieces was turned towards the spectators ; when a tragedy, the second ; when a satyrical piece (such for instance, as the Cyclops of Euripides) the third was exposed to view. And these triangular machines were placed under the arches of the theatre, marked in the plate, A, B, C. See VITRUVOL .I. L VIUS,

Prostrate in dust, there Asia's cities weep,
 And huge Niphates bend his mountain steep ;
 The Parthians there the backward arrow ply,
 And vainly strive to conquer as they fly : 45
 Caesar shall here a double triumph boast,
 And conquer'd nations kneel from either coast.
 Around in order'd ranks an awful band,
 Rome's ancestors in breathing stone shall stand :
 Thy seed, Assaracus, the mighty line 50
 That drew from Jove its origin divine :
 Next Tros, whom Troy her ancient father calls,
 With him, the god who rais'd her lofty walls.
 Envy, foul fiend, shall view with baleful eyes
 Cocytus' billows black around her rise ; 55
 The stings of mad Ixion's snakes shall feel,
 Quake at th' unconquer'd stone, and ever-whirling wheel.

VIUS, B. 5. and *L'Antiquité expliquée per D. Ber. MONT-FAUCON*, tom. 3. p. 235.

38. *Higb on the gates.*] These beautiful verses, containing an allegory of his design to publish the Aeneid in honour of Augustus, must have been added in the year of Rome 734, after Augustus had subdued the Indians and Parthians, and recovered the eagles which had been lost by Crassus. The *invidia infelix* points at those persons, which must have been many, that secretly repined at the imperial dignity of Augustus. Let me add the following passage from Polymetis.

The persons he is speaking of are the enemies of the Julian family: or the faction, as he calls it, against the Caesars. These, he says, should be represented on the temple he would build to Augustus, as in the tortures of Tartarus; and more particularly as punished in the same manner as Ixion and Sisyphus. Ixion was punished there for his ingratitude and impiety: Sisyphus as a villain and a robber. So that this is calling all the party against Augustus, rascals and ingrates; and infers the highest compliment to that prince, at the same time that it is the most cruel of invectives against his enemies.

POLYMETIS, pag. 203

Mean time, Maecenas, we'll the woods pursue;
 The task is arduous, but enjoyn'd by you.
 Without thine aid no fancy fires my breast; 60
 Hasten, let us burst the bands of idle rest.
 Hark, from afar Cythæron's voice I hear,
 Taygetus' opening dogs my spirits cheer;
 With neighing steeds tall Epidaure resounds;
 From the deep groves the doubling din rebounds. 65
 The time may come, when my maturer muse
 Augustus' glowing fights her theme shall chuse:
 And thro' more ages bid his glory last,
 Than have from Tithon's birth to Cæsar pass.

The youth, who studious of th' Olympic meed, 70
 And fond of fame, would rear the stately steed;
 Or bend the sturdy bullock to the share,
 Must chuse the dam with nice sagacious care.
 First, by these marks select thy mother-cow,
 A clumsy head, broad neck, and lowering brow: 75
 Her double dew-laps from her chin must rise,
 In spacious folds descending o'er her thighs:
 Be her's a disproportion'd length of side,
 Her limbs all fram'd with vast unwieldy pride:
 Let tufts of hair her ample feet adorn, 80
 Rough be her ear, and wreath'd her bending horn:

75. *A clumsy head.*] Varro and Columella say that a good cow's head should be large, *latis frontibus*, her neck long and broad, her dew-laps hanging low, and in general, that her body should be long and large. *Ut sint bene compositæ, ut integris membris ablongæ, amplæ—corpore amplo, bene costatæ, largis humeris, bonis clunibus.*—Virgil seems to have had his eye on this passage. Varro likewise mentions the length of tail.

Nor less her worth, if o'er her jetty skin,
 Few random spots of snowy white be seen ;
 Or if she aim a blow, or spurn the yoke,
 Or wear a stern-brow'd bull's rough threatening look. 85
 Majestic she must walk with lofty mien,
 And proudly sweep with length of tail the green.
 When now four years have steel'd her lusty frame,
 Then let her prove kind Hymen's mutual flame :
 At ten release her ; now no more to prove 90
 The toils of culture, or the joys of love.

Mean time, while warmth of youthful blood prevails,
 To the soft bliss admit thy sprightly males :
 Let their first vigour try the fierce embrace ;
 So herds shall rise on herds, and race on race. 95
 Our best of days advance with double speed,
 Diseases, pains, a ghastly troop ! succeed ;
 With care, and labour, and complaining age,
 And ruthless death's inexorable rage.
 For fresh supplies thy weary'd race remove ; 100
 Nor place on one alone the weight of love.
 Still propagate thy breed with annual care,
 And with new births the fleeting race repair.

Nor less with equal care select the steed ;
 Thou who resolv'st to rear a generous breed, 105
 Nurse from his earliest youth the chosen fire,
 And feed with careful hand his native fire.

[96. *The days of youth.*] This tender moral reflection thrown in, diversifies and exalts the low subject the poet is treating of.

Ev'n now the colt treads high with stately pace,
 And moves his pliant limbs with easy grace ;
 Outstrips the rest ; the first that dares to brave 110
 The unknown bridge, or tempt the threat'ning wave :
 No sudden sounds alarm his soul with dread ;
 Sublime his arched neck, and small his head :
 Short paunch, and breadth of back his might attest,
 And prominent with brawn his fearless breast. 115
 Of colours chuse the dapple or the grey,
 For white and dun a dastard race betray.
 Lo ! when the battle's distant din he hears,
 Restless he paws ; erects his eager ears ;
 With generous fury glows his quivering frame, 120
 And from his nostril bursts the fierce, collected flame.
 O'er his right shoulder his redundant mane
 Waves to the zephyr as he skims the plain.
 Thro' his broad back shoots a divided spine,
 And arms with double force his mighty chine. 125

108. *Ev'n now the colt.*] Having spoken of the marks of good cows, the poet proceeds to speak of horses, and gives a beautiful description of a colt that is fit to be chosen for a stallion. There is some difficulty concerning the meaning of *spadices* : but after much enquiry Dr. Martyn thinks it is, the colour we call bay, chesnut, or sorrel.

116. *Grey.*] *Glaucus*, when spoken of the colour of an horse, signifies a dark or iron-grey ; our people in Wales, still call a grey horse *kephal glauce*. HOLDSWORTH.

119. *Restless he paws.*] This is a beautiful description of a mettlesome horse ; but it is far excelled by that noble one in the book of Job. Particularly, " He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth he (for joy !) that it is the sound of the trumpet," is more spirited and strong than any circumstance in Virgil's picture.

While o'er the green as his fleet hoof is borne,
 Echoes the trembling ground beneath the solid horn.
 Such Cyllarus, by Spartan Pollux tam'd,
 And such the steeds, in Grecian story fam'd,
 That to the battle bore the god of war, 130
 And whirl'd the fierce Achilles' thund'ring car :
 Such Saturn too, when from the guilty bed,
 Cloath'd in a flowing mane, his queen he fled, [head. }
 And pierc'd with neighings shrill hoar Pelion's piny }
 When now his strength and youthful years decay, 135
 With no inglorious ease his pains repay ;
 But grant him, of thy gratitude, to close
 His honour'd age at home in safe repose.
 When genial warmth forsakes his frozen veins,
 Love is a toil, and barren are his pains ; 140
 In all the rage of impotent desire,
 As o'er the stubble flies the catching fire,
 His sparks are spent, and in a flash expire, }
 Be careful then to mark thy stallion's age,
 His feats, his offspring and his native rage ; 145
 Whether he grieve, when in the race outdone,
 Or proudly triumph in the trophy won.
 Dost thou not see the cars, a rival train,
 Shoot from the goal, and pour along the plain ?

132. *Such Saturn.*] Saturn, to avoid being discovered by his wife Ops while he was engaged with Phylira his mistress, turned himself into a beautiful horse. Chiron the famous centaur was the son of this nymph Phylira.

148. *Dost thou not see.*] No description was ever more spirited and lively than this of the chariot race. The poet has crowded

By varying fits, each trembling charioteer, 150
 Now flush'd with hope, now pale with panting fear,
 Plies the loud lash, hangs headlong o'er the reins ;
 Swift bounds the fervid axle o'er the plains :
 Now deep in dust obscur'd the chariot flies,
 Now mounts in air, and gains upon the skies. 155
 The strife runs high, too fierce for dull delay,
 The sandy volumes darken all the way :
 Bath'd in their followers' foam appear the first :
 Such is the love of praise, and glory's thirst.
 First Erichthonius dar'd with dauntless skill 160
 To yoke four steeds, and guide the victor's wheel.
 Thessalia taught the conduct of the bit,
 To mount the steed, and form his pliant feet

crowded into a few lines all the circumstances that are most striking in the famous description of Homer, and it must be owned has here excelled the Greek poet. One may say, as Longinus does on almost a similar occasion, that the soul of the reader is, as it were, mounted in the chariot, and whirled along in the race with it.

160. *Erichthonius.*] *Bigas primum junxit Phrygum natio, quadrigas Erichthonius.* Pliny. He likewise says, that Bellesophon invented the backing of horses, Pelethronius bridles and furniture, and the centaurs of Thessaly the fighting on horseback.

163. *Form his pliant feet.*] There are several lines in this third Georgic, which shew that the manège was found out much earlier than some would imagine. Witness the following passage.

Gyroſque dederat

Impoſiti dorſo.

And that other,

Carpere mox gyrum incipiat, &c.

The simile just after was meant to shew, a violently swift, but at the same time a level and uniform motion.

HOLDSWORTH.

To paw the ground, to wheel, to turn with grace,
 And tread the plain with more majestic pace. 165
 The same the labour and the praise to breed,
 Or for the bit or car, the vigorous steed :
 In each is requisite a generous rage,
 A swiftness in the course, and blooming age.
 Without these virtues, vain all former boast, 170
 That erst he chas'd in fight a trembling host ;

170. *Without these virtues.*] I received the following observations on this passage from a very ingenious gentleman.

I have always been absolutely at a loss to make out the connection of these three lines [in the original] with the foregoing. Translators and commentators make *quamvis* refer to something which is certainly not expressed there, nor I think implied, or insinuated ; nor indeed consistent with what is there expressed. How can the horse be supposed, *saepae versos hostes egisse*, if he was not *calidus animis* ? *Quamvis* implies an opposition between these two, whereas no two things can be more naturally connected. You have got over the difficulty as well as your neighbours, but I think it is insuperable, as the text now stands. Besides, *quamvis* implies that the horse above described was *rejected*, not that he was *sought out*, and *chosen*. In short I am persuaded, these three lines are not in their right place. Suppose them placed as follows :

*Hunc quoque, ubi aut morbo gravis, aut jam segnior annis
 Deficit, abde domo ; nec turpi ignosce senectae.
 Quamvis saepe fugâ versos ille egerit hostes,
 Et patriam Epirum referat fortesque Mycenae,
 Neptunique ipsa deducat origine gentem.
 Frigidus in venerem senior——*

Hunc quoque——abde domo——quamvis—— Observe that the horses here abovementioned are war horses ; Pollux', Mars' and Achilles' his horses ; *qui versos hostes egerint* ; now see how well the other passage goes on without the lines in question.

*Aequus uterque labor, aequi juvenemque magistri
 Exquirunt,*

Tho' Argos, or Epirus gave him birth,
 Or Neptune's trident-stroke, that op'd the pregnant earth.
 These rules observ'd, with copious grain they feed
 The husband of the herd, and father of the breed : 175
 With genial herbs his amorous heat sustain,
 And give the copious stream, and golden grain;
 Lest weak he faint amid the soft embrace,
 The famish'd father of a puny race.
 But to the mares deny they fostering food, 180
 And drive them from the browze and cooling flood,
 When now the new desires invade the boiling blood : }
 Oft bid them glow beneath the sunny ray,
 And oft fatigue them thro' the dusty way :
 When groan the floors beneath the trampled corn, 185
 And light in air the fluttering chaff is borne ;
 Lest too luxurious ease and plenty cloy,
 Blunt the keen sense, and choak the paths of joy :

Exquirunt, calidumque animis, et cursibus acrem.

His animadversis——

Nimirum, juventute, animis, pernicitate——

By way of precedent, there are two remarkable transpositions of this kind in the Aeneid, which the critics have rectified against all authority of manuscripts —— Aeneid 6. 745. *Donec longa dies* —— and the two next lines, which should follow, after *exurit igni*.

Aeneid 10. 717. *Ille autem imparvidus* —— and the next, which should come after *clamoribus instant*.

176. *With genial herbs.*] Varro and Columella speak of the necessity of feeding the bulls amply for two months before the time. *Tauros duobus mensibus ante admissuram herbâ, et paleâ et foeno facio pleniores et a faeminis secerno.*

VARRO.

182. *New desires.*] *Voluptas nota* in the original, does not signify the experienced pleasure, says Dr. Martyn, but the desire which now first begins to be known by the young mare. *jam nota*, just now (and not before) known.

So shall the female feel the flowing feed,
 And suck with greedy rage the rushing steed. 190
 We now forsake the fires, transfer our care,
 From the stout stallion, to the teeming mare.
 Let her no more, along the lab'ring ground,
 Draw the flow car, or leap the rising mound :
 Nor tempt the flood, nor skim the level mead, 195
 But turn her lonesome in the lawns to feed,
 Soft with the greenest grass, and many a mossy bed;
 Where some full river rolls his plenteous waves,
 Mid' shades of ridgy rocks, and cooling caves.
 Along the forests dark where Selo flows, 200
 And old Alburnus lifts his ilex-crowned brows,
 Of winged insects swarms a frequent flight,
 Aëtron in Greece ; at Rome Afilus hight ;

203. *Afilus*.] This insect is a dreadful plague to the cows of Italy. An Italian writer quoted by Dr. Martyn informs us, that it resembles a wasp, has two membraneous wings, with which it makes a most horrible whizzing. The belly is terminated by three long rings, one within another, from the last of which proceeds a formidable sting. This sting is composed of a tube thro' which the egg is emitted, and two augres, which make way for the tube to penetrate into the skin of the cattle. These augres are armed with little knives which prick with their points, and cut with their edges, causing intolerable pain to the wounded animal. The mention of these insects put me in mind of an elegant rural comparison in Spenser.

As when a swarme of gnats, at eventide,
 Out of the fennes of Allan doe arise,
 Their murmuring small trumpets sounden wide,
 Whiles in the air their clustering armie flies,
 That as a cloud doth seeme to din the skies ;
 Ne man nor beast may rest, or take repast,
 For their sharpe wounds, and noyous injuries ;

Till

Soon as their issuing hosts, with humming sound
 Approach, the cattle quit the groves around ; 205
 The skies re-echo to the mingling roar,
 The groves, and dry Tanager's sultry shore !
 This plague, the just revenge of guilty love,
 To frantic rage th' Inachian heifer drove. 209
 More thick they swarm, when glows the noon-tide heat,
 Then shift thy pregnant herd to some sequester'd seat ;
 Or drive them forth, when dawns the purple light,
 Or Hesper gilds with glittering stars the night.

When now the dam has felt Lucina's pains,
 A farther care to rear the calf remains ; 215
 On each betimes, they print the branding fire,
 To note the name, the lineage, and the fire.
 Let this be doom'd to propagate the breed ;
 This at the sacred shrine a victim bleed :
 But that be destin'd in the field to toil, 220
 Break the stiff clods, and cleave the stubborn soil ;
 The rest unmark'd, as frolic leisure leads,
 Wanton, inglorious, o'er the grassy meads.

The steers allotted to the shining share,
 Observe to teach and tame with timely care ; 225 }
 While now their tender years correction bear.
 Bind them with collars from the tender spray,
 And when their necks the servile band obey ;

'Till the fierce northern wind with blustering blast
 Doth blowne them quite away, and in the ocean cast.

Fa. Q. B. 2. l. 9. f. 16.

226. *Correction bear.*] Mr. Dryden talks here of sending the calf to school, restraining him from the bad examples of the world, and instructing him in moral precepts. Virgil says only, *ad studium et usum agrestem dum faciles animi.*

Connect two well-match'd bullocks in the trace,
 And bid them learn in pairs the plain to pace; 230
 Oft let them draw the waggon's empty load,
 Whose wheels scarce print the dust, or mark the road :
 Next let them smoke beneath th' incumbent mafs,
 Join'd to the beechen axle, bound with brafs.
 Mean time thy unyok'd young not only feed 235
 With grafs and willow-leaves, or marshy weed;
 But crop with careful hand the nodding ears;
 Nor let the dam, as erst in ancient years,
 Contribute to the pail her milky load;
 Be all her udder on her calf bestow'd. 240

But if thy bosom burn in ranks of war
 To lead the marshall'd host, or urge the car,
 Where strays thro' Pifa's plain th' Alphaean flood,
 Or whirl along the thunderer's olive-wood;
 To trumpets shrill, to many a martial deed, 245
 And glare of glittering arms inure the steed :
 Oft let him toil the slow car's load to bear,
 The rustling reins oft rattle in his ear :
 With flattery sooth him, while with conscious pride,
 He feels his master clap his sounding side. 250
 Begin betimes; while weak and youthful yet,
 Bend his soft mouth to brook a slender bit;
 Just wean'd and trembling from his mother's side;
 New to the curb, and in the course untry'd.
 But when to four full springs his years advance, 255
 Teach him to run the ring, with pride to prance;
 The plain in measur'd steps and time to beat,
 And in alternate paces shift his feet;

Oft let him seem to spring with labour'd might ;
 Then challenge whirlwinds in his airy flight : 260
 While as he pours abroad with loosen'd reins,
 His lightsome feet scarce touch the printless plains.
 Like Boreas in his course, when rushing forth
 He calms the Scythian skies, and clears the cloudy north :
 Resound the tall tops of the trembling trees, 265
 The heavy harvests nod beneath the breeze :
 O'er plains, o'er seas, the driving tempest sweeps,
 And to the sounding shore pursues the boiling deeps.
 A steed like this, with conquering steps will strain,
 And foam with blood across th' Elean plain ; 270 }
 Or with obedient neck the Belgic car sustain.
 When now the colt is broke to bear command,
 Feed him with kindly care, and plenteous hand :
 For yet untam'd, his pamper'd pride disdains
 To feel the sounding lash, and galling reins. 275
 But nought will keep their vigour more entire,
 Than from their breasts to turn the stings of blind desire :

263. *Like Boreas.*] It cannot be imagined, by the severest critics, who think such beauties of style in the ancients chimerical, that Virgil did not intend to represent by this swift line of dactyles the course of the wind :

Ille volat, simul arva fuga, simul aequora verrens.

270. *Elean plain.*] This alludes to the Olympic games celebrated about Olympia in the region of Elis. Whoever would have a just notion of the great political usefulness of these celebrated games of Greece, will meet with much pleasure and instruction from the learned and ingenious Mr. West's dissertation prefixed to his translation of an author, to whom he alone, of all the moderns, has done justice, in a spirited and elegant translation of his odes.

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Their bulls they banish to some lonely scene,
 Where vast rocks, and wide rivers intervene :
 Or to the plenteous stall the beast remove, 280
 Far from the tender sex, and lure of love.
 For while the female charms his sickening sight,
 No more the groves, or springing grass invite.
 She vers'd in wanton looks, and winning wiles,
 The mighty rivals to the fight beguiles. 285
 The beauteous heifer strays the darksome wood ;
 With mutual rage they rush; thick streams the sable blood;
 From their broad brows the clashing horns rebound,
 With bellowings loud the groves and skies resound.
 Nor when the war is o'er, their rage expires, 290
 'To distant vales the vanquish'd wretch retires ;
 Weeps his disgrace, his conqu'ring rivals boast,
 Yet more the fair, that unreveng'd he lost :
 And oft with pensive looks, as he retreats,
 The parting exile views his ancient seats. 295

285. *The mighty rivals.*] The description of the bulls
 contending for the female is admirable ; particularly, that
 fine circumstance of the vanquish'd bull looking back on his
 old accustomed stall and pastures when he is forced to retreat.
 And still more so, the circumstance of his lying down, sul-
 lenly disconsolate, on the stones, feeding upon rushes and
 prickly leaves, and exercising his horns against the trunks of
 trees, to enable himself to contend again with his hated rival.
 All these beautiful strokes are concluded by the noble simile
 of a vast wave rolling towards a rocky shore. The pause at
procumbit in the original

Monte minor procumbit,

is very expressive of the thing intended.

286. *Heifer.*] This line in the original is supposed to be
 spurious.

Then steels his limbs to toil, improves his might,
And roughly rests on craggy flints the night :
On prickly leaves and pointed rushes fed,
He feigns to gore a tree with butting head,
Bends his stern brows and pushes at the air, 300
And spurns the scatter'd sand, a prelude of the war.
Now when his nerves with new-felt fury glow,
Headlong he seeks his unexpected foe :
As when a rising billow by degrees,
Begins to boil amid the whitening seas ; 305
Loud o'er the rocks then rolls with horrid roar,
And mountain-like bursts on the subject shore :
The troubled depths in circling eddies rise,
And heave the fable sand in whirlwinds to the skies.
Thus man and beast, the tenants of the flood, 310
The herds that graze the plain, the feathery brood,
Rush into love, and feel the general flame ;
For love is lord of all, and is in all the same.
'Tis with this rage the mother lion stung,
Prowls o'er the plain, regardless of her young. 315
'Tis then the shapeless bear with scenes of blood,
With murderous deeds pollutes th' affrighted wood :
Then boars in fight with double warmth engage,
And the grim tygres calls forth all her rage.
Ah ! wretched then the traveller who strays 320
Forlorn o'er Lybia's unfrequented ways !
See, what thick pants the stallion's fires declare,
Whene'er in tainted gales he scents the mare :
Nor curbs, nor torturing whips his rage restrain,
And mountains rise to check his flight in vain ; 325

In vain the torrent rolls, that tumbling sweeps
 The massy fragment from the craggy steep.
 Rushes the Sabine boar, and rends the ground,
 And whets his tusks to strike the surer wound :
 Rubs his rough sides against th' accustom'd oak, 330
 And disciplines his brawn to bear the rival's stroke.
 How fares the youth, who feels the pleasing pain
 His marrow pierce, and throb in every vein ?
 In darkness drear he swims the stormy main :
 Above from heaven's high gate the thunder roars,
 The dashing waves re-echo round the shores. 335
 Nor weeping parents, nor the fated fair
 Retards his course, too soon his cruel death to share !
 Why should I sing how hungry wolves engage,
 How beasts of Bacchus' car, how mastiffs rage :
 Ev'n timorous stags provoke the woodland war ; 340
 But far above the rest the passion of the mare.
 Ev'n Venus here a stronger lust inspir'd,
 When to revenge the Potnian mares she fir'd.
 Wing'd with desire they bound o'er Gargarus' height,
 Nor loud Ascanius' torrents stay their flight : 345
 When now their veins the vernal mildness warms,
 And with kind heat their lusty limbs informs ;

332. *How fares the youth.*] The poet alludes to the celebrated story of Hero and Leander, perhaps the most entertaining of all the ancient love-tales ; the Musaeus who has written an elegant poem on this subject, was not the ancient Musaeus ; for several false conceits and thoughts, rather pretty than solid, and contrary to the simplicity of the older Grecian writers, evidently betray the later age of the piece. See Vol. 3. B. 6. N. ver. 928. 'Tis observable Virgil hints, that the whole species would encounter the same dangers as Leander did for the sake of love.

To the tall cliffs impatient they repair,
 And from the westward snuff the fleeting air :
 Where, wonderous power ! without th' assisting steed,
 Made pregnant by the parent-breeze they breed. 351
 Thence wild o'er rocks and deep-sunk vallies stray,
 Far from the northern blast, or source of day ;
 Or whence wet Auster's gloomy damps arise
 To hang with sable clouds the sadden'd skies. 355
 Hence from their wombs, what th' artless shepherd calls
 Hippomanes, a trickling poison falls :
 Which baleful step-dames in the bowl infuse,
 With many murmurs mix'd, and herbs of magic juice.
 But time is on the wing ; too far we rove 360
 Bewilder'd with an argument we love.

Enough of herds : fresh labours now succeed,
 The shaggy goats and fleecy flocks to feed.
 Hence shall the husbandman new glory raise,
 While his low cares I lift in labour'd lays : 365
 Nor flight, to grace so mean a theme, the toil,
 And beautify with flow'rs a barren soil.
 But me the sweet desire of sacred praise
 Leads forth to trace Parnassus' pathless ways,

357. *Hippomanes.*] The hippomanes signifies two things.
 1. A certain liquor that flows from a mare ready to take horse.
 2. An excrescence of flesh which the new foaled colts have upon their foreheads. It is black, round, and of the bigness of a dried fig. It is pretended that these two hippomanes have a peculiar virtue in philtres, and other such compositions designed for fascinations. And that the last is of such a nature, that a mare has no sooner dropped her colt, but she eats this piece of flesh, without which she would not suckle it. A curious reader may see a learned dissertation on this subject, at the end of Mr. Bayle's Dictionary.

Down to Castalia's spring my car to guide, 370

Where never poet mark'd the mountain's side.

Now, hallowed Pales, I resound thy reign,

O grant thine aid ! in more majestic strain.

First, I command, beneath the fostering shed,

Till spring returns, thy sheep with grafs be fed : 375

Strew fern beneath, lest from the piercing ice

O'er their soft skins the loathsome scabs arise.

Nor less, thy goats with leafy fodder fill,

And give them water recent from the rill.

Safe from the stormy north, their stalls prepare 380

To catch the wintry sun, and southern air ;

When cold Aquarius, from his cloudy sphere,

Pours his last drops upon the parting year.

Nor less the toil the shaggy goat to raise,

Nor less the profit that the goat repays. 385

Let Caria boast her Tyrian-tinctur'd fleece ;

Yet these afford more numerous increase ;

And, as their swelling dugs you drain the more,

In fuller plenty streams the milky store.

371. *Where never poet.*] This is an imitation of Lucretius :

Nec me animus fallit, quam sint obscura, sed acri

Percussit thyrsos laudis spes magna meum cor ———

————— *juvat integros accedere fontes*

Atque baurire, juvatque novos decerpere flores,

Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musae.

372. *Pales.*] The third is the most epic of all the Georgics ; and the introduction to it, as well as several passages in it, particularly this, shew that Virgil regarded it as such himself.

HOLDSWORTH.

Book 3. OF VIRGIL. 235

Besides, their hairy beards the shepherds shear, 390

To cover tents, or cloath the mariner.

At will they graze Lycaeus' shrubby top,

And the rough thorn or prickly bramble crop ;

Return untended with their bleating train,

And o'er the threshold scarce their strutting dugs sustain.

Since then so little of thy care they know, 396

Guard them from freezing blasts, and icy snow :

Gladly supply them with the leafy spray,

Nor in bleak winter's reign refuse thy hoarded hay.

But when the frolic zephyrs breath the spring, 400

Both flocks abroad to verdant pastures bring.

When now the morning-star but dimly dawns,

Lead them to taste the coolness of the lawns ;

When hoar with virgin dew the grass appears,

Haste, let them drink the morning's earliest tears. 405

When the fierce sun grows hot with parching ray,

And woods resound the shrill cicada's lay :

Then drive them to fresh springs, their thirst to slake ;

To troughs of oak, or to the spreading lake.

But at mid-noon, to green and gloomy glades ; 410

Where some tall oak uprears his aged shades :

391. *Tents.*] Varro speaking of the usefulness of goats, says, they are shorn for the use of sailors and war.

404. The freshness of the morning is painted in the liveliest colours. We must remember that 'tis a morning in Italy : a morning in a hot climate.

407. *Shrill cicada's lay.*] Several of the modern Italian poets mention the singing of the cicada, as very loud and troublesome in the great heats of summer. *Per gli ombrosi rami le argute cicale cantando si affatica vano sotto al gran caldo.* Arcadia del Sannazaro, Prosa 10.

Or where the ilex-forest, dark and deep
 Sheds holy horrors o'er the hanging steep,
 Again refresh them, with their verdant food,
 When sinks the sun, and with the crystal flood, 415
 When evening-air their cooling damps diffuse,
 And Cynthia bathes the groves in balmy dews ;
 When thro' the brakes is heard th' acanthis' song,
 And halcyons chaunt the hollow shores among.
 Why should I sing of Lybia's artless swains ; 420
 Her scattered cottages, and trackless plains ?
 By day, by night, without a destin'd home,
 For many a month their flocks all lonely roam ;
 So vast th' unbounded solitude appears.
 While, with his flock, his all the shepherd bears: 425
 His arms, his household gods, his homely shed,
 His Cretan darts, and dogs of Sparta bred.

412. *Or where.*] How beautifully has the poet enlivened these dry precepts concerning the time of watering cattle by this description of a little landscape ! of a vast old oak standing in a valley, or an ilex of ever-green oak, spreading a thick and solemn shade ! The description of the cool of the evening is delightful.

412. *Ilex-forest, dark and deep.*] We have not a full idea of this image, from our not knowing of how deep a green the ilex is, and what a vast shade it casts in Italy, where there are great numbers of this tree.

422. *By day.*] This digression to the shepherds of Africa cannot be sufficiently praised ; one sees them

Pasturing on from verdant stage to stage.

THOMSON, *Cast. of Ind.*

The vastness of those plains are represented by the very flow of this line in the original,

———*itque pecus longain deserta sine ullis*
Hospitiis——tantum campi jacet.

So Rome's brave sons, beneath th' oppressive load
 Of arms and baggage, trace the destin'd road ;
 And while he ne'er suspects th' impending blow, 430
 Sudden unfurl their standards on the foe.

Not so in Scythia shepherds tend their sheep ;
 Where sad Moeotis spreads his fable deep :
 Thick yellow sands where Ister's torrents roll,
 And Rhodope returns to meet the pole. 435

Their flocks they stall ; for o'er th' unfruitful scene,
 Nor fields, nor trees are cloath'd in lively green.
 One waste of snow the joyless landscape lies,
 seven ells in height the ridgy drifts arise.
 There still the bitter blasts of winter dwell ; 440
 Nor the sun's rays the paly shade dispel,
 When first he climbs his noon-tide course, or laves
 His headlong car in ocean's purple waves.

428. *So Rome's.*] The Roman soldiers were wont to carry in their campaigns, not only their swords, helmets and shields, but likewise provisions for a fortnight, and stakes and utensils.

432. *Not so.*] The contrast is very strong between the scenes of Africa and Scythia, and has a fine effect. This variety, this magic art of conveying the reader from one climate to another, constitutes one of the greatest beauties of poetry.

M. de Maupertuis, who, with some other academicians, was sent by the king of France, in 1736, to measure a degree of the meridian, under the arctic circle, says, that brandy was the only liquor, which could be kept sufficiently fluid for them to drink : *Pendant un froid si grand, que la langue et les levres se geloient sur le champ, contre le tasse, &c.* And a little afterwards he tells us, that the spirits of wine froze in their thermometers. See Dr. MARTYN for other instances.

441. *Nor the sun's rays.*] In the original this is a verse consisting wholly of slow spondees, which by their melancholy flow represent the dismalness of the object described.

442. *Or when he climbs.*] This winter-piece has ever been admired as one of the capital paintings of Virgil.
 Thomson

Th' encroaching ice the loitering current feels,
 And on its bosom bears the studded wheels. 445
 Where erst the stately bark was wont to ride,
 Waggon, thro' paths unknown, securely glide.
 Oft from the vessel bursts the brazen band,
 Stiff round their sides their frozen garments stand.
 With sharpen'd steel they cleave the humid wine, 450
 And chains of solid ice whole lakes confine;
 Their matted beards, by the keen climate froze,
 With hanging icicles are hard and hoar.
 Mean time the skies are dim with falling snows;
 Thick clouds of fleet th' unwieldy ox enclose: 455
 In growing heaps benumb'd, the crowding deer
 Scarce from beneath, their branching antlers rear:
 Nor these with hounds the hunter-train surprize,
 With nets, or feathers dipt in purple dyes;
 But with the sword invade them, while in vain 460
 Against the huge reluctant load they strain,
 While void of help, in piteous sounds they bray;
 Then home, with shouts of triumph bear the prey.

Thomson has given us a noble imitation of it, in his view of winter within the polar circle; and has added some striking circumstances, not to be found in Virgil, which modern travellers have observed. I cannot forbear transcribing his conclusion, where he describes winter personally, The image is very sublime.

Here Winter holds his unrejoycing court,
 And thro' his airy hall the loud misrule
 Of driving tempest is for ever heard;
 Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath,
 Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;
 Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows,
 With which he now oppresses half the globe."

In caverns deep, with oak uppil'd, they raise,
 And many a branching elm, the crackling blaze ; 465
 From cold secure, around the flaming hearth,
 Waste the long dreary night in social mirth :
 Guiltless of wine, the goblet still goes round,
 With Ceres' juice, and sparkling cyder crown'd.

Such is the race of savage swains that lie 470
 Beneath the rigours of the parol sky ;
 And sore afflicted by the piercing east,
 Their limbs with furs and brinded skins invest.

Is wool thy care ? avoid the shaggy ground,
 Where thistles and the prickly bur abound. 475

Nor let too fat a soil thy choice invite ;
 Chuse first a flock with fleeces soft and white.
 Tho' white thy ram, yet if a swarthy tongue
 Appears beneath his humid palate hung,
 Reject him, lest he blacken all the breed, 480

And let another to the task succeed.
 Thus by a snowy fleece, th' Arcadian god
 Drew down pale Cynthia from her bright abode ;
 Nor did'st thou, queen of night, disdain his love,
 Pleas'd with the cheat, thou met'st him in the grove.
 If milk thou lov'st, with lillies from the brook, 486

Soft leaves, and salted herbage feed thy flock :
 Hence stung with thirst to the clear rills they haste, }
 Hence are their swelling dugs more tightly brac'd, }
 While in the milk remains the savoury taste. 490 }

478. *Tho' white thy ram.*] If the tongue of the ram be black or speckled. (says Varro) the lambs will be of the same colour. See Aristotle of animals to the same purpose.

Some, when the kids their dams too deeply drain,
 Their tender mouths with steely bits restrain.
 Their morning-milk the peasants press at night,
 Their evening bear to town, when dawns the light;
 Or in the mass, with sparing hand, they pour 495
 The tasteful salt, and keep for winter store.

Nor be it thy last care thy dogs to breed;
 With fatt'ning whey the vigorous mastiff feed,
 And Sparta's race: thus, should the thief invade,
 Or wolf, thy fold, when night extends her shade; 500
 Or roving robber from th' Iberian rocks;
 These shall repel their rage, and guard thy flocks:
 Thy hound, the wild-ass in the sylvan chace,
 Or hare, or hart, with faithful speed will trace;
 Assail the muddy cave, with eager cries, 505
 Where the rough boar in sullen ambush lies;
 Press the tall stag with clamours echoing shrill,
 To secret toils, along th' aerial hill.

And learn to burn within thy sheltering rooms,
 The spicy cedar, and Galbanean gums; 510
 Beneath th' unshifted sheds, in winding cells
 Oft shut from day, the bloated serpent dwells:

497. *Nor mean thy toil.*] The poet says but little concerning the care and breeding of dogs, or of hunting. Mr. Somerville, in his poem entitled the Chace, one of the best productions of this age, has in some measure supplied the defect.

497. *Nor mean thy toil.*] *Tibi cura*, says the orig. *Tibi*, to you, Mecaenas; putting the reader in mind, that the poem, as didactic pieces should be, is addressed to a particular person.

The viper too that loves a shady seat,
 That seeks beneath thy roofs a safe retreat,
 Of herds the bane, of sheep the pois'nous pest 515
 Battens in secret o'er her darksome nest.

Snatch, shepherd, stones, quick snatch the knotted oak,
 And quell his stately crest with many a stroke;
 Assail his hissing throat, and swelling spires;
 Lo! by degrees his timorous head retires, 520
 And the last orbs of his unfolded tail

A ling'ring length of loosen'd volumes trail.
 Calabria's woods too breed a baleful snake,
 With lofty breast elate, and scaly back,
 And with broad spots his winding belly black: 525 }
 Who when the rivers burst their rocky bounds,
 And southern showers bedew the vernal grounds,
 Haunts the moist bank, and in the wat'ry bogs
 Gluts his foul paunch with fish, and croaking frogs:
 But when keen heat the fens of moisture drains, 530
 He leaps on earth, and hisses o'er the plains,

513. *The viper too.*] Dr. Martyn thinks the serpent here described to be that which Pliny calls *boas*. This author affirms they grew to a prodigious bigness, and that a child was found in the belly of one of them in the reign of Claudius: that they feed on cow's milk, whence they have their name. The line a little below in the original,

Cape saxa manû, cape robora pastor,

is exactly expressive of hurry and eagerness: there are no particles in it; so in the fourth Aeneid,

Ferte citi flammas, date tela, impellite flammas.

523. *Calabria's forests.*] The poet here speaks of another serpent called *cherfydrus*, from its living both in water, and on earth.

While mad with thirst, and fill'd with drear amaze
 At the fierce beam, his rolling eye-balls blaze.
 May ne'er soft sleep, on a green bank, surprize,
 Fast by some forest-side, my drooping eyes, 535
 When cast his skin, and sleek in youthful prime,
 Recent he rides, before the sun sublime ;
 Regardless of the nest, deserts his young,
 And brandishes abroad his triple-forked tongue.

I'll teach thee too the signs and causes all, 540
 Of dire diseases on the folds that fall :
 Scabs oft the flock, a foul contagion, seize,
 When winter hangs with icicles their fleece ;
 Or cold rains pierce, or unwash'd sweats adhere
 To their shorn skins, or prickly brambles tear. 545
 Hence in fresh currents of the crystal wave,
 With careful hands their flocks the shepherds lave ;
 And first the father of the bleating crowd,
 Floats with his moisten'd fleece along the flood :
 Or bathe their limbs in bitter lees of oil, 550
 With bubbles that from molten silver boil ;

539. *Brandishes.*] *Micare* in its true and natural signification relates to any quick motion. So Virgil, *micat auribus*; and Cicero, *digitis micare* ; of that old game so common in Italy of darting out their fingers, and guessing at the number of these darted out each time, so often mentioned by others of the Roman writers. HOLDSWORTH.

542. *Scabs oft the flock.*] Columella remarks, that a sheep as soon as it is sheared, should be anointed with a mixture of the juice of lupines, the lees of old wine, and the dregs of oil, in equal quantities ; and be washed four days afterwards in the sea, or in rain water salted ; and quotes the authority of Celsus, who affirms that a sheep treated after this manner, will be free from the scab a whole year, and that the wool will be the softer, and the longer for it.

Live sulphur mix, with tar's black-streaming juice,
 Or temper pitch that Ida's pines produce ;
 Or mingle, fraught with fat, the waxen store,
 Or sea-born squills, with potent hellebore. 555
 But the best cure which sage experience knows,
 Is with a lance the ulcer to disclose.

Still grows the fore, while yet the shepherd stands
 Doubtful, nor dares exert his healing hands,
 And anxious happier signs of heav'n demands. 560
 But when o'er th' inmost bones the pain hath spread,
 On their parch'd limbs a raging fever fed,
 To quell the bleating sufferer's torrid pain,
 Pierce in the bottom-foot the throbbing vein :
 This practise the Bisaltae, when they haste 565
 To Rhodope, or roam the chearless Dacian waste :
 And fierce Gelonian, when, for savage food,
 He blends the milky stream with horse's blood.

If one thou see'st affect the cooling shade,
 Or cropping listlessly the topmost blade ; 570
 Droop on the plain, with ling'ring paces wait
 Behind, and home return alone and late ;
 Soon let thy steel remove th' infected sheep,
 Lest o'er th' unwary flock contagion creep.
 Less fierce and frequent on the wintry main 575
 Black whirlwinds rush, than plagues that waste the plain :
 Nor single deaths suffice, at once they prey
 On young and old, and sweep whole herds away.

567. *And fierce Gelonian.*] Several northern nations at this time drink mare's milk mixed with blood. Pliny says, they mixed millet with it. The Tartars use it to this day.

This truth to know, th' aërial Alps behold,
 And meads thro' which Timavus' streams are roll'd; 580
 And Noric cliffs with spiry castles crown'd ;
 Lo ! waste and wild the plains appear around :
 Ev'n now deserted stands the shepherd's state,
 And far and wide the lawns are desolate.
 Here sprung of old by sickly gales begot, 585
 A plague with all the fires of autumn fraught,
 Which flew the beasts that range the field or wood,
 Defil'd the freshness of the crystal flood, }
 And scorch'd with baleful breath the grassy food. }
 Strange kind of death ! for when the parching pain 590
 Had shrunk the limbs, and throbb'd in every vein,
 A pois'nous humour flow'd from all the frame,
 Till every bone one putrid mass became.
 Before the shrine, in snowy fillets drest,
 And holy bands, the consecrated beast 595 }
 Fell, and prevented oft the lingering priest. }

579. *This truth to know.*] The sense is, if any one knows what sort of places these were, when they were full of cattle, he may now see them empty, tho' it is a long time since the pestilence. SERVIUS.

580. *The pastures where Timavus'.*] Timavus is a river of Carniola.

581. *And Noric cliffs.*] Noricum was a region of Germany bordering on the Alps.

585. *Here sprung of old.*] We now enter upon the celebrated description of the plague. Virgil puts forth all his strength to endeavour to excel Lucretius's sixth book on the plague at Athens. Neither can I think he has so far excelled his master (for such he was) as some critics imagine. Many hints in this description are borrowed from Thucydides his famous account of the plague at Athens.

Or if he sunk beneath the fatal stroke,
 Lo ! on the shrine, his entrails fail to smoke ;
 No more, misled by many a doubtful sign,
 The prophet can the dark event divine ; 600
 While scarce the knife with the faint tincture reeks,
 Nor the thin gore the sandy surface streaks.
 O'er flow'ry meads, or at the plenteous stall,
 In lifeless heaps, the calves and heifers fall.
 The gentle dogs run mad ; the sick'ning swine 605
 Pant with thick coughs, with swelling quinsies pine.
 The victor horse, forgetful of his food,
 The palm renounces, and abhors the flood :
 By fits, he stamps the ground with eager feet,
 While from his body bursts a doubtful sweat, 610
 That stood in icy drops, as death appear'd ;
 His parch'd hide to the touch is rough and hard.
 These signs at first his future fate presage ;
 But as the spreading pest improv'd its rage,
 With sanguine beams fierce glow'd his ardent eyes, 615
 And heav'd his struggling breath wth groans and sighs ;

607. *The victor horse.*] *Infelix studiorum* in the original is an expression resembling *laeta laborum, victus animi, fortunatus laborum*. Read the description of these symptoms from this line to *fauces premit aspera lingua* : see how nobly the poet acquits himself on a subject, so exceeding difficult to be described, and let us compare it with a singularly fine one in Lucretius of the same kind :

*Perturbata animi mens in moerore metuque ;
 Triste supercilium, furiosus vultus, & acer,
 Sollicitae porro, plенаeque sonoris aures :
 Creber spiritus, aut ingens, raroque coortus,
 Tenuia sputa, minuta, croci continet a colore,
 Salsaque per fauces raucas vix edita tussi.*

Of blood black torrents from his nostrils sprung,
 To the swoln palate clove his furry tongue.
 Some have at first with short success apply'd,
 Pour'd thro' an horn, Lenaeus' purple tide ; 620
 But soon fresh fuel to the growing flame
 It gave, and death the medicine became :
 While, with bare teeth, their limbs all bath'd in gore,
 Ev'n in the bitterest dying pangs they tore.
 O crown, ye gods, a pious people's pray'r, 625
 And let the bad alone so dire an error share.
 Lo ! while he toils the galling yoke beneath,
 Foaming black blood, the bullock sinks in death :
 The pensive hind the brother-steer relieves,
 Who faithful for his lost companion grieves, 630
 And the fix'd share amid the furrow leaves.

628. *The bullock sinks.*] How exquisitely beautiful is the pause in this verse at the word *gemitus* ! *it tristis arator*, by the very melancholy flow of the words places the action of the ploughman full in our sight: the next line proceeds as slow as possible, consisting of all spondees,

Moerentem abjungens fraterna morte juvencum.

The circumstance of the brother heifer grieving is most tenderly imagined. *Non umbrae altorum nemorum* is an imitation of Lucretius, where the dam is lamenting her calf that was sacrificed.

*Nec tenerae salices, atque herbae rore vigentes,
 Fluminaque ulla queunt summis labentia ripis
 Obliviscere animum subitamque avertere curam. L. 2.*

It was upon reading these exquisite lines, that Scaliger declared, he had rather have been the author of them, than to have been the first favourite of Craesus or Cyrus. I wish there was no sentiment in Scaliger's works more extravagant than this,

Nor grassy mead, nor shade of lofty grove,
 The mournful mate's afflicted mind can move :
 Nor yet from rocks delicious streams that roll
 As amber clear, can sooth his sorrowing soul : 635
 His flanks flow loose ; his eyes grow dim and dead ;
 And low to earth he bears his heavy head.
 Ah ! what avails their ceaseless useful toil ?
 What boots it to have turn'd the stubborn soil ?
 Yet ne'er choice Massic wines debauch'd their taste, 640
 Ne'er did they riot in the rich repast ;
 Their food is leafy brouze, and nature's grass,
 Their draught fresh rills that thro' the meadows pass,
 Or torrents rushing from the rocky steep ;
 Nor care disturbs their salutary sleep. 645
 Then cars were drawn, while sail'd th' accusom'd kine,
 By ill-pair'd buffaloes, to Juno's shrine.
 And men with harrows toil'd to till the plain,
 Ev'n with their nails dug in the golden grain ;
 The rattling waggon's galling yoke sustain'd, 650
 And up the rocky steep laborious strain'd.
 The wily wolf, no more by hunger bold,
 With secret step explores the nightly fold.
 Deers herd with hounds, and leave their sylvan seat,
 And seek with man to find a safe retreat : 655
 Thick on the shores, like shipwreck'd corpes cast,
 Appear the finny race of ocean vast ;
 Th' affrighted Phocæ to the rivers haste. }

652. *The wily wolf.*] Observe these circumstances of the wolves prowling no more, because *acrior illum cura domat*, and the deer wandering near the dwellings of men.

656. *On the shores.*] Virgil, 'tis observed, expressly contradicts

His cave no more to shield the snake avails ;
 Th' astonish'd hydra dies, erecting all his scales. 660
 Ev'n their own skies to birds unfaithful prove,
 Headlong they fall, and leaves their lives above ;
 Nor change of pasture could relief impart ;
 Destructive proves each vain attempt of art :
 Chiron, Melampus healing herbs, no more, 665
 Fathers of sacred medicine explore :
 Tisiphone, from hell let loose to light,
 Before her drives Diseases and Affright ;
 Still day by day more huge the fiend appears,
 Till high to heav'n her horrid head she rears : 670

tradicts Aristotle, who asserts, that pestilential diseases never affect fishes.

660. *Th' astonish'd hydra.*] I know not a stronger image in any poet whatever, than this of the serpents dying with their scales erect and stiffened : *attoniti* (which is a most expressive word in this place) *squamis astantibus hydri*!

The poet brings into his subject the inhabitants of every element, making as it were all nature affected with this dreadful plague.

665. *Chiron, Melampus.*] The poet does not mean that the plague happened in the days of Chiron and Melampus, but that the very best physicians acknowledged their skill useless in this case. Particulars are named for generals. Lucretius speaks personally of the art of physic, which has a fine effect.

—*Muffabat tacito* MEDICINA timore.

667. *Tisiphone from hell.*] The figure of Tisiphone driving before her a train of diseases and fear, is nobly conceived. It puts one in mind of that exalted image in Habakuk, where the prophet speaking of Jehovah in his wrath, says, “ Before him went the pestilence.” The circumstance of the fury Tisiphone's growing every day larger and larger, is truly admirable, as it so justly alludes to the daily increase of the pestilence.

While lowings loud, and many a mournful bleat,
 The withering banks and hanging hills repeat :
 At length whole herds to death at once she sweeps,
 High in the stalls she piles the loathsome heaps ;
 Dire spectacle! till sage experience found 675
 To bury deep the carrion in the ground.
 Useless their hides ; nor from the flesh the flame
 Could purge the filth, nor streams the favour tame.
 Nor could their skins supply the woolly store,
 O'ergrown with scabs, and stiff with many a fore : 680
 Wove from such fleeces those who wore a vest,
 Were with foul sweats, and burning spots oppress'd ;
 Till thro' the limbs diffus'd, th' insatiate flame
 With dire contagious touch consum'd the putrid frame.

672. *The withering banks.*] What can be more pathetic than the circumstance of the hills perpetually echoing with the mournful bleatings of the sheep, &c.

674. *She piles.*] That is Tisiphone ; making this fury the agent, and continuing to personify her.

683. *Th' insatiate flame.*] Some imagine that by *sacer ignis* an erysipelas or St. Anthony's fire may be meant. But perhaps *sacer* may mean *accursed*, or *direful* — *auri sacra jaces* — *sacer esto*. I cannot agree with many critics, that Virgil hath on the whole excelled his master Lucretius in his description of the plague. There are several strokes of the strongest painting, and the deepest pathetic in Lucretius's sixth book ; which sixth book, by the way, seems but an odd and imperfect conclusion of his work.

The End of the Third GEORGIC.

THE
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.

BOOK the Fourth.

A R G U M E N T.

Having treated of many other animals together in the foregoing book, the poet selects a single creature for the subject of this, and devotes a whole book to the description of the wonderful bee. It is divided into eight parts. I. Of a proper station for bees. II. Of their gathering honey, their swarms, and their battles. III. Of two species of bees. IV. Of their wisdom, civil prudence, government, and republic. V. Of the time of taking their honey. VI. Of the diseases incident to bees, with the signs and the remedies of such diseases. VII. Of the method of repairing the race of bees when the whole breed is lost. VIII. Of Aristæus, the author of this method of repairing a stock of bees; his adventure with Proteus; the reasons Proteus assigns to Aristæus for his loss, which artfully introduce the story of Orpheus and Eurydice: with whose unhappy fate the poet concludes his consummate work.

THE
G E O R G I C S
O F
V I R G I L.

BOOK the Fourth.

NEXT heavenly honey, and ambrosial dews,
This too Maecenas hear ! my song pursues ;
Great wonders of an insect-race imparts,
Their manners, mighty leaders, arms, and arts ;
The subject trivial, but not low the praise, 5
If heav'n should smile, and Phoebus aid the lays.

First for your bees a shelter'd station find,
Impervious to the gusts of rushing wind ;

Ver. 1. *Honey.*] The poet calls honey *aerial* and *heavenly*, according to the opinion of the old philosophers, who believed that it was derived from the dew of heaven. This heavenly dew they thought was received by the flowers, and thence gathered by the bees. Every reader of taste perceives how Virgil exalts and dignifies these wonderful insects, by ascribing to them thro' this whole book, the manners, passions, and actions of men. I have before said, that the characteristic of this book is elegance, and of the former, sublimity. Virgil has borrowed most of his observations upon bees from Varro, and Aristotle's treatise of animals.
Moderns

Rude blasts permit them not, as wide they roam,
 To bring their food and balmy treasures home. 10
 To tread the sweets of neighb'ring flow'rs forbid
 The sportful lambkin, and exulting kid ;
 Nor springing herbs let roving heifers crush,
 Nor nibbling sheep the morning dew-drops brush,
 Nor scaly lizards near their walls be found, 15
 Nor ravenous birds, nor merops flit around,
 Nor Progne, markt her breast with hands of blood ;
 Each wandering insect they destroy for food,
 Arrest the lab'ring bees, a luscious prey,
 And to th' expectant hungry nests convey. 20
 But near, let fountains spring, and rivulets pass,
 Meand'ring thro' the tufts of moss and grass ;

Modern philosophy has cleared up many mistakes which these ancients fell into, with regard to bees and other animals.

12. *Sportful lambkin.*] Which puts me in mind of those sweet lines of Euripides, Hippol. Coron. 73.

Σοι τὸνδε πλεχλὸν σεφάνον ἐξ ἀκηρατῆ
 Λαιμῶνος, ὡ δ' εὐποῖνα, κοσμησας φέρω,
 Ἐνθ' ὅτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοὶ φέρων βόλα,
 Οὐδ' ἦλθε πῶ σιδήρεος, ἀλλ' ἀκηρατὸν
 Μελισσὰ λαιμῶν νεινὸν διερχέλαι.

An author (whose meanest praise is his critical taste and judgment) instead of *νεινὸν* in the last verse, would read *νεινός*. *Μελισσὰ νεινός*, the vernal bee.

Jortin on Ecclesiastical Hist. 387. vol. 2.

16. *The merops.*] *Apiaster*, or *Bee-eater*, is shaped like a king-fisher. It is about the size of a black-bird. Progne the daughter of Pandion was turned into a swallow, which has the feathers of its breast stained with red.

Let spreading palm before the portal grow,
 Or olive wild his sheltering branches throw ;
 That when the youthful swarms come forth to play, 25
 Beneath the vernal fun's unclouded ray,
 The kings may lead them to this cool retreat,
 Where flow'ry banks invite, and boughs defend from heat.
 Hast thou a living rill, or stagnant lake,
 With willows and huge stones the waters break ; 30
 On which the wanderers safely may alight,
 When rains or winds retard their destin'd flight ;
 On which emerging from the waves, may land,
 And their wet wings to tepid funs expand.
 Let cassia green and thyme shed sweetness round, 35
 Savoury, and strongly-scented mint abound,
 Herbs that the ambient air with fragrance fill ;
 While beds of violets drink the freshening rill.
 Whether your hive you frame of woven boughs,
 Or rear with pliant bark the concave house, 40

23. *Palm.*] Dr. Martyn observes that the palm-tree is of several sorts ; but believes the species cultivated in Italy (and consequently that meant in this place) to be the date-tree.

27. *This cool retreat.*] Milton has an expression of the same nature with *hospitiis frondentibus* in *Comus*,

———To lodge

Under the *spreading favour* of these pines.

30. *Willows.*] In the original *transversas salices*. Varro would have a small stream near the apiary not above 2 or 3 fingers deep, with several shells or small stones standing a little above the surface of the water, that the bees may drink.

36. *Savoury.*] The *thymbra* of the ancients is generally thought, says Dr. Martyn, to be some species of *satureia*, or *savoury*. *Serpyllum* is *wild thyme*. *Cassia* is not *rosemary*, as some have supposed.

Strait be its entrance ; left the varying year
 Congeal the golden combs with frost severe,
 Or melt the mass in summer's scorching beams ;
 Baneful alike to bees are both extremes.
 For this around the chinks, by nature led, 45
 Soft wax and flow'rs and fucus thick they spread :
 For this their stores with potent glews enrich,
 More tough than bird-lime or Idean pitch.
 And oft in caverns, as tradition tells,
 They fix their bower, and form their secret cells ; 50
 Oft in cleft stones their hoarded sweets are laid,
 Or moss-green oaken trunks with age decay'd.
 Thou too with mud the chinky sides o'erlay,
 And thinly shade them with the leafy spray.
 Nor by their walls let yews unwholsome grow, 55
 Nor let the red'ning crabs in embers glow,
 Ne'er trust them near the fen, or stagnate flood,
 Nor rank pernicious stench of reeking mud,
 Nor where the voice from hollow rocks rebounds,
 And hill to hill returns the mimic sounds. 60

For what remains, when the bright sun hath driv'n
 Pale winter down, and op'd the smiling heav'n
 With cloudless lustre, strait abroad they rove,
 Around each lawn, around each verdant grove,
 And sip the purple flowers, and lightly skim 65
 Across the dimpled brook and river's brim :

56. *The red'ning crabs.*] This must sound very odd to modern readers. The Romans were wont to burn crabs to ashes, and used them as a remedy for scalds and burns.

61. The poet proceeds to speak of the swarming of bees, and points out the method of making them settle.

Hence inexpressive fondness fills their breast,
 For their young progeny and rising nest ;
 With joy their waxen labours they renew,
 Thick'ning to honey their nectareous dew. 70

Burst from their cells if a young troop be seen,
 That fails exulting through the blue serene,
 Driv'n by the winds, in clouds condens'd and dark,
 Observe them close, the paths they steer remark ;
 They seek fresh fountains, and thick shady bowers, 75
 'Tis then the time to scatter fragrant flowers,
 Bruis'd baum, and vulgar cerinth spread around,
 And ring the tinkling brags, and sacred cymbals found :
 They'll settle on the medicated seats,
 And hide them in the chambers' last retreats. 80

77. *Cerinth*, &c.] *Trita melisphylla, et cerinthae ignobile gramen*, says the original. Dr. Martyn, who is very accurate and full in explaining the botanical part of the Georgics, says, that the first plant seems to be a contraction of *melisso-phylon* ; and that the description of it agrees very well with the *melissa* or *baum*, a common herb in the English gardens.

Cerinte (which is derived from *κνεον*, a *honey-comb*) is the *cerinte flavo flore asperior*, or *yellow flowered honey-wort*. The stalks are about the thickness of one's finger, round, smooth, whiteish, and divided into several branches. The leaves embrace the stalks and branches with their bases, and diminish gradually to a point. They are of a blueish colour marked with white spots, set on both sides with prickles, and neatly indented. Dr. Martyn in his quarto edition has given a beautiful print of the cerinte finely coloured.

78. *Cymbals*.] *Tinnitusque cie*, &c. This custom is still used. Aristotle mentions it likewise, and questions whether they hear or not, and whether it be delight or fear that causes the bees to be quieted with such noises. For my own part I believe it to be of no manner of service in this case.

MARTYN,

But if intent on war they seek the foe,
 'Twixt two contending kings when discords glow,
 The peoples' troubled minds you soon presage,
 Burning for battle, swoln with eager rage ;
 Hark ! a rough clangor calls the hosts to arms, 85
 A voice, like the deep trumpet's hoarse alarms !
 Furious they meet, and brandishing their wings,
 Fit all their claws, and sharpen all their stings ;
 Around their monarch's high pavilion croud,
 And call the lagging foe with shoutings loud. 90
 Now when a day serene and bright they gain,
 From the vext city rush both battles main ;
 Dire is the conflict, loud resounds the sky,
 Close in one cluster they contend on high,
 And headlong fall, as thick as clattering hail, 95
 Or acorns strew, from shaken oaks, the vale.
 The kings shine glorious 'mid the thickest war,
 And mighty souls in narrow bosoms bear :
 Stedfast in fight, unknowing how to yield,
 Till these or those forsake the deathful field. 100
 These fierce contentions, this pernicious fray,
 A little dust flung upwards will allay.

85. *Hosts to arms.*] This battle is described with as much spirit and strength, and the fury of the combatants is painted in terms as bold and majestic, as if it were an engagement between the greatest heroes. One cannot but observe how Virgil exalts his bees by giving them all the warlike apparatus of an army. Such are the expressions—
Aeris rauci canor, spicula, and praetoria, magnisque vocant clamoribus hostem, per medias acies, erumpunt portis concurrunt.

When now both chiefs have left the doubtful strife,
 The vanquish'd wretch must yield his forfeit life ;
 Lest he consume the stores, an useless drone ; 105
 While uncontroll'd the victor mounts the throne.
 Two diff'rent kinds of regal bees, behold,
 The better bears a coat that glows with gold ;
 More delicate proportions grace his frame,
 And radiant scales o'er all his body flame : 110
 While in the other, sloth's foul hues prevail,
 Groveling he scarce his breadth of paunch can trail.
 Alike a different form the people wear,
 These squalid to the sight, and rough appear :
 As when the traveller, all spent with thirst,
 Spits from parch'd lips the froth-attemper'd dust. 115
 The better race refulgent hues unfold,
 Bedropt with equal spots of glistening gold ;
 At stated seasons, these shall plenteous pour
 From their swoln combs the sweet nectareous show'r ;
 Yet pure as sweet, and potent to diffuse 120
 New flavours mild o'er Bacchus' harsher juice.

115. *Spits from parch'd lips.*] 'Tis observable that this is the only low, or droll image, that Virgil hath admitted into the Georgics ; so careful was he of keeping up a dignity and majesty throughout his poem. Philips in his CYDER, has not always followed this judicious example : witness the following passages, bordering on burlesque.

Alloo thy furious mastiff ——

Blind bayard rather —— Add to these instances,

the bag-piper, and the description of a swain eating a beautiful apple whose inside is decayed ; whose surprize, to heighten the ridicule by a pompous simile, is compared to an army marching over flowery meadows under which are caverns filled with gun-powder. This is more like Cervantes than Virgil.

But when the swarms in aether idly play,
And from their emptied hives uncertain stray ;
From the vain sport their giddy minds restrain,
Nor great, to check the fugitives, the pain : 125
Be it thy care, from these high reverenc'd kings,
Conductors of their flight, to clip the wings ;
The troops to march without their leaders fear,
Nor dare the standard from the camp to bear. 130
Let gardens gay, with saffron flowers, invite
The fickle wanderers, and retard their flight :
Safe let them live beneath Priapus' eye,
Whose hook rapacious birds and robbers fly.
And let the swain who makes the hive his care, 135
Sweet thyme and pines from the steep mountains bear,
Nor should himself refuse, their straw-built house
Far round to shade with thickly-woven boughs ;
Himself should plant the spreading greens, and pour
Thick o'er the thirsting beds the friendly show'r. 140
And here, but that I hasten to the shore,
Prepar'd to strike my sails, and launch no more ;
Perhaps the gardens' culture I might praise,
Teach doubly-fruitful Paestum's rose to raise ;
How celeri and endive love to grow 145
On verdant banks where gushing rivulets flow ;

145. *How celeri.*] These exquisite lines make us wish the poet had enlarged upon the subject of gardening. We have no poem on it but an insipid one of F. Rapin, written in pure Latin indeed, but with no poetical spirit, and indeed I think not comparable to an old fragment of Columella on this subject. Considering the many great improvements made in this science, perhaps the garden is the properest and most fruitful

How best the creeping cucumber may swell ;
 Nor daffadil's late bloom would fail to tell ;
 Acanthus' bending stalks, nor ivy hoar,
 Nor myrtles green, that love the breezy shore. 150
 For once beneath Oebalia's lofty towers,
 Where black Galefus thro' rich pastures pours,
 An old Corycian yeoman I beheld,
 Lord of a small hereditary field,
 Too poor to nourish sheep, or fatning kine, 155
 The golden corn, or Bacchus' joyous vine ;
 Yet he thin fallads 'mid the bushy ground,
 And vervain planted, and white lillies round ;
 And late at eve returning home to rest,
 His frugal board with unbought dainties blest, 160
 Nor wish'd to be the richest monarch's guest. }

fruitful subject for a didactic poem of any whatsoever. Especially as this art hath been lately so much improved by Mr. Kent, who with great taste hath banished the regular, strait walks, Dutch work, and unnatural uniformity formerly so much admired.

151. *Once.*] Who that reads this, says Dr. Trapp, despises not the wealth, and pities not the persons of all the great ones upon earth ?

158. *Lillies.*] The original is, *albaque circum lilia*. Tho' the white lilly be the most common species of that flower, among us, yet it was the most celebrated, and best known among the ancients. Thus Virgil does not produce the epithet *alba* in this place, without reason. In other passages our poet has taken care to insist on the whiteness of the lilly ; as in Aen. lib. 12.

—— *Mixta rubent ubi lilia multa*

Alba rosa ——

And Aen. 6.

—— Can-

260 THE GEORGICS Book 4.

When spring with flowers, with fruits when autumn
 He first could pull the apple, crop the rose; [glows,
 When winter drear had clove the rocks with cold,
 And chain'd in ice the rivers as they roll'd, 165
 Ev'n then acanthus' tender leaves he shear'd,
 Slow zephyr blam'd, and alate summer fear'd.
 He the first swarms could boast and pregnant bees,
 From the full combs could richest honey squeeze: }
 Tall were his pines and limes, and fruitful all his trees. }
 Whatever buds the bending branches wore, 171
 So many fruits in autumn swell'd his store.
 He too could high-grown elms transplant in rows,
 Or harden'd pear-trees from their place transpose,
 Or plumbs with all their fruits, or lofty planes 175
 That shelter'd with broad shades the quaffing swains.
 But since too narrow bounds my song confine,
 To future bards these subjects I resign.

Now listen while the wond'rous powers I sing,
 And genius giv'n to bees by heav'n's almighty king, 180

— *Candida circum,
 Lilia funduntur.* —

170. *Pines.*] Columella observes that limes are hurtful to bees, but mentions the pine as agreeable to them.

175. *Planes.*] This relates to the Corycians having the art of removing even large trees.

179. *Wond'rous powers.*] There are many passages in the Georgic, where Virgil manages his prince's cause with great dexterity, and at the same time shews an equal regard for the liberty and interest of his country; but certainly nothing can come up to the fourth book, on this head. What wonderful knowledge must that writer have had, who could ransack all nature to find out

Whom in the Cretan cave they kindly fed,
 By cymbals' sound, and clashing armour led,
 They, they alone a general interest share,
 Their young committing to the public care ;
 And all concurring to the common cause, 185
 Live in fixt cities under settled laws :
 Of winter mindful and inclement skies,
 In summer hoard, for all the state, supplies :
 Alternate some provide the nation's food,
 And search it o'er each forest, field, and flood ; 190
 Some for the comb's foundations gather glew,
 And temper gums with daffadil's rich dew ;
 Then with nice art the waxen arches bend,
 Or with nectarcous sweets the fret-work cells distend ;
 Commission'd some, th' important office bear, 195
 To form the youth, the nation's hope, with care ;

out a species of insects whose constitution might be supposed to be made up of a republic governed by a monarch !

This was one of the principal reasons of Virgil's chusing the bees for his finishing piece ; and this makes him say to Maecenas in his introduction to it,

Admiranda tibi levium spectacula rerum.

You will soon see to whom the wonders are applicable, which I relate of these little creatures. How fine a compliment was it to the Roman people, and their prince, to shew that the bees had their laws (upon which all their happiness was founded) by inspiration from Jupiter, and their prince from the same source !

BENSON.

180. *King.*] The poet here insinuates, that Jupiter gave the bees a degree of reason, as a reward for their feeding him, when an infant, with honey, while he was concealed in a cave from his father Saturn.

Some, by joint compact, at the city's gate
 Intent, and watchful of heav'n's changes, wait,
 Examine ev'ry motion of the skies,
 What show'rs approach, what storms or winds arise ;
 Or ease the burden'd lab'ers limbs, or drive 201
 The drones, a race of sluggards, from the hive ;
 The crowded dome with toil intensely glows,
 And from the breathing sweets a blended fragrance flows,
 As when Jove's bolts to frame, the Cyclops sweat, 205 }
 The rough and stubborn ore subdued with heat,
 While chiming hammers in just order beat ; }

198. *Intent, and watchful.*] Vaniere, in his book on the management of bees, relates the following extraordinary circumstance, which he says he takes from M. Maraldi, *Histoire de l'Academie Royale de Sciences*, 16 Nov. 1712. *sur les abeilles*, p. 299.

*Excubias vigilum fallens, impune penates
 Cum semel intrasset limax cornutus, eosque
 Turparet fluidae crasso lentore salivae ;
 Obsupere domi gerulum, stimulisque frequentes
 Invasere fero retrahentem corpus ab icu,
 Seque suae vallo testae, spumisque tegentem ;
 Irrita jam cum tela forent ; apis advocat artes
 Ingeniosa suas ; et cerae prodiga totam
 Incrustat cochleam ; monstrum fatale recondens
 Hoc veluti tumulto, ne tetrum afflaret odorem.*

Praedii Rustici, lib. 14. p. 257.

This is an instance, if it be true, of more astonishing sagacity than any mentioned by Virgil.

205. *Cyclops.*] Pope observes with fine taste on this passage: " That the use of the grand style on little subjects, is not only ludicrous, but a sort of transgression against the rules of proportion and mechanics : I believe, now I am upon this head, it will be found a just observation, that the low actions of life cannot be put into a figurative style without being

Some turn the weighty mass with griping tongs,
 While others heave the puffing bellows' lungs,
 Or the red bars in hissing water lave, 210
 Deep Aetna groans below, thro' many an echoing cave:
 No less (small things with greater to compare)
 Toil the Cecropian bees with ceaseless care;
 Each knows his task: the old their towns attend,
 Shape their nice cells, their daedal works defend; 215
 But late at evening those of youthful prime
 Return fatigu'd, their thighs furcharg'd with thyme;
 They prey on arbutus, willow buds devour,
 Sweet cassia, and the saffron's glowing flow'r;
 From fruitful limes sip rich mellifluous dew, 220
 And suck soft hyacinths of purple hue.
 All rest together, all together toil:
 At morn they rush abroad, the flow'rs to spoil;
 When twilight evening warns them to their home,
 With weary wings and heavy thighs they come, 225
 And crowd about the gate, and mix a drowsy hum. }
 At last, into their inmost chambers creep,
 And silent lie dissolv'd in balmy sleep.

ing ridiculous, but things natural can. Metaphors raise the latter into dignity, as we see in the Georgics; but throw the former into ridicule, as in the Lutrín. I think this may be very well accounted for; laughter implies censure; inanimate and irrational beings are not objects of censure; therefore these may be elevated as much as you please, and no ridicule follows: but when rational beings are represented above their real character, it becomes ridiculous in art, because it is vicious in morality. The bees in Virgil, were they rational beings, would be ridiculous, by having their actions represented on a level with creatures so superior as men; since it would imply folly or pride, which are the proper objects of ridicule."

POPE, Postscript to the Odyssey.

When Eurus blows, or gathering winds impend,
 The skies they trust not, nor their flights extend ; 230
 But drink of streams that flow their city nigh,
 Work near the walls, and short excursions try ;
 Poize their light bodies like a ballanc'd boat,
 With sands, as through tempestuous air they float.
 But chief, this circumstance may wonder move, 235
 That none indulge th' enfeebling joys of love,

236. *Enfeebling joys of love.*] Vaniere, who received new lights on this subject from the observations of modern philosophers, describes the queen laying her eggs in the following manner :

*Explorans paritura toros regina paratos ;
 Inferit alvelis caput, ut quae nixibus edet,
 Unis ova parens deponat singula nidis.
 Circumstat stipata cohors, uteroque dolentem
 Reginam mulcet pennis ; et murmure blando
 Hortatur duros partus tolerare labores.
 Illa retro gradiens, averso corpore nidos,
 Ingreditur ; parientem abdit sexangula cera ;
 Turba ministra, tamen pennas limina tensas
 Explicat, obducens faetae quasi vela parenti,
 Virginibus tantum pudor atque modestia cordi est.*

Prædii Rustici, lib. 14. pag. 260.

237. *Feel.*] The modern philosophers are much better acquainted with the nature of insects, than were Aristotle or Theophrastus, from whom Virgil borrowed largely in his account of bees. They assert and prove that no animal (nay no plant) is produced without a concurrence of the two sexes, and that consequently equivocal generation is an idle and most groundless opinion. See *Redi de insectis*, and the works of Linnæus. With regard to the generation of bees, I shall present the reader with a large but entertaining extract from a French author lately published. The matter of the treatise is taken from the works of the learned Mr. Maraldi, and Mr. de Reaumur, and is sung into a sprightly dialogue.

It begins with a general view of the hive. The glass hive represents a city of sixteen or eighteen thousand inhabitants

None pangs of child-birth feel, but leaves among,
And fragrant flow'rs, they gather all their young ;

bitants. This city is a monarchy, consisting of a queen, of grandees, soldiers, artizans, porters, houses, streets, gates, magazines, and a most strict civil policy. The queen dwells in a palace in the inner part of the city ; some of the cells (which run perpendicular from the top of the hive) are larger than the rest, and belong to those, who after the queen, hold the first rank in the commonwealth ; the others are inhabited by the common people. The cells are all publick buildiags, which belong to the society in common ; for among this people there is no *meum* nor *tuum*. Some cells are close magazines for a store of honey ; others for the daily nourishment of the labouring bees ; others are destin'd to receive eggs, and to lodge the worm from which the young bee springs.

In the hive there is usually but one queen, six or eight hundred, or even a thousand males called drones, and from sixteen to sixteen thousand or upwards, of bees without sex, who carry on the whole policy and manufacture of the hive. The mother-bee, or the queen-mother, is the soul of the community, and but for her, every thing would languish ; when she is secreted from the hive, the other bees lose all care of posterity, and make neither honey nor wax, so that the city soon becomes desolate and empty.—The rest of the bees pay her the most dutiful respect, and follow her wherever she goes, or is carried from home. Her subjects perform their several functions without any instructions, and without giving her the least trouble. Her only business is to people the hive ; and this she fulfils so perfectly, as well to deserve the most honourable of all political titles, that of *Parent of her country*. To merit the love of her subjects, 'tis necessary she should produce from ten to twelve thousand children in the space of seven weeks, and one year with another, from thirty to forty thousand. She is easily distinguish'd from the other bees, by the form of her body, which is longer and slenderer. Her wings are shorter, in proportion to her length : in the other bees, they cover the whole body ; in her they terminate about half way, at the third

Hence their great king and citizens create,

And build their waxen realms, and courts of state. 240

ring of her trunk. She has like the rest, a sting and bladder of poison; but is with much more difficulty provoked to use them; though when she does, the wound is larger and much more painful.

The drones, or the thousand husbands of this single queen, are found in the hive only from the beginning of May to the end of July. Their number increases every day during that space of time, and is greatest when the queen is breeding; in a few days after which period they die a violent death. Their way of living is very different from the rest: for excepting the single moment when they pay their duty to the queen, they are quite idle, and enjoy a most luxurious fare; being fed only with the finest honey, whereas the common bees live in a great measure upon wax. These go out early in the morning, and don't return till they are loaded with honey and wax, for the good of the society: The drones, on the contrary, don't go abroad till about eleven o'clock to take the air, and return punctually about six at night. They have no stings, nor those long elastic teeth with which the other bees work up the honey; nor those kind of hollows, which serve them for baskets to bring it home to the hive. The other bees, or the *manufacturers* (as we may call them) have an infinite number of strange particularities about them, of which we can only impart a few to the reader.

Their head seems triangular, and the point of the triangle is formed by the meeting of two long elastic teeth, which are concave on the inside. In the second and third pair of their legs, is a part called the brush, of a square figure, with its outward surface polish'd and sleek, and its inward hairy, like a common brush. With these two instruments they prepare their wax and honey. The materials of their wax lie in the form of dust, upon the *lamina* of flowers. When the bee would gather this dust, she enters into the flower, and takes it up by means of her brush, to which it easily adheres. She comes out all covered with it, sometimes yellow, sometimes red, or according to the native colour of the dust. If this dust be inclosed in the *Capsulae* of a flower, she pierces the *Capsulae*, with her long moveable teeth, and then she gathers it. When it is quite loaded with dust,

On rugged rocks, oft as abroad they fly
 They tear their wings, sink with their loads and die;
 Such love of flow'rs inflames their little hearts,
 So great their glory in these matchless arts.
 Tho' seven short years are to one race decreed, 245
 Still they continue an exhaustless breed, }
 From age to age increase, and fires to fires succeed. }
 Lydian nor Mede so much his king adores,
 Nor those on Nilus' or Hydaspes' shores :
 The state united stands, while he remains, 250
 But should he fall, what dire confusion reigns !
 Their waxen combs, and honey late their joy,
 With grief and rage distracted, they destroy :
 He guards the works, with awe they him surround,
 And crowd about him with triumphant sound ; 255
 Him frequent on their duteous shoulders bear,
 Bleed, fall, and die for him in glorious war.
 Led by such wonders, fages have opin'd,
 That bees have portions of an heavenly mind :

dust, she rubs herself to collect it, and rolls it up in a little mass. Sometimes she performs this part of her business by the way ; sometimes she stays till she comes to the hive. As soon as it is formed into a ball about the size of a grain of pepper, she lodges it in her basket, and returns home with a joy proportionable to the quantity she brings. The honey of the bees is found in the same place with the wax. It is lodged in little reservoirs, placed at the bottom of the flower.

241. *Rugged rocks.*] These lines in the original are certainly misplaced ; they seem to come in more properly, says Martyn, after ver. 196 of the original. I am indebted for this observation to the learned Sir Daniel Molyneux, Bart. F.R.S.

That God pervades, and like one common soul, 260
 Fills, feeds, and animates the world's great whole ;
 That flocks, herds, beasts, and men from him receive
 Their vital breath, in him all move and live ;
 That souls discerpt from him shall never die,
 But back resolv'd to God and heaven shall fly, 265 }
 And live for ever in the starry sky.

When of its sweets the dome thou would'st deprive,
 Diffuse warm-spirited water thro' the hive,
 Or noxious smoke thro' all their dwellings drive. }
 Twice the sweet artists plenteous honey make, 270
 Thou twice each year th' ambrosial treasures take ;
 First when Taygete shews her beauteous head,
 Disdaining Ocean's melancholy bed ;
 And when with sudden flight the fish she leaves,
 Descending pensive to the wintry waves. 275
 Fierce rage and choler in their bosoms glow,
 With venom'd stings they dart upon their foe,
 Their subtle poison creeps the veins around,
 In sweet revenge they die upon the wound.

272. *Taygete.*] Virgil in speaking of the rising of the
 Pleiades, speaks of them in the singular number, and that per-
 sonally.

Taygete simul os terris ostendit honestum
Pleias —

'Tis probable, that on the ancient globes this was a distinct
 constellation from Taurus, and represented by one of the
 sisters only, that named by Virgil. Aratus and Erasthones
 both speak of it as distinct from Taurus ; and the latter calls it
 Πλειας, and not Πλειάδες. SPENCE.

279. *Die upon.*] It is said to be a vulgar error, that bees
 lose their lives with their stings.

But if in winter bleak, their broken state, 280
 And drooping spirits you commiserate,
 Who doubts, regardful of the pinching time,
 To fumigate their hives with fragrant thyme,
 And pare their empty wax ? The lizard lurks,
 Or slow-pac'd beetle in their inmost works, 285
 Or oft their golden hoards the fat drones spoil,
 A race that riots on another's toil ;
 Or the fierce hornet, sounding dire alarms,
 Provokes the lab'ers to unequal arms ;
 Or baneful moths, or she whom Pallas hates, 290
 Suspends her filmy nets before their gates.
 The more they lose, the more with ceaseless care,
 They strive the state's destruction to repair ;
 Their plunder'd wealth and wasted combs renew,
 And swell their granaries with thicken'd dew. 295
 But when, as human ills descend to bees,
 The pining nation labours with disease ;
 Chang'd is their glittering hue to ghastly pale,
 Roughness and leanness o'er their limbs prevail ;
 Forth the dead citizens with grief are borne, 300
 In solemn state the sad attendants mourn.
 Clung by the feet they hang the live-long day
 Around the door, or in their chambers stay, }
 Hunger and cold and grief their toils delay.
 'Tis then in hoarser tones their hums resound, 305
 Like hollow winds the rustling forest round,

280. *Winter.*] He now proceeds regularly to tell us, how to manage those hives in which the honey is left for supporting the bees through the winter, and likewise enumerates the particular vermin, and plagues that infest them.

Or billows breaking on a distant shore ;
 Or flames in furnaces that inly roar.
 Galbanean odours here I shall advise ;
 And thro' a reed to pour the sweet supplies 310
 Of golden honey, to invite the taste
 Of the sick nation, to their known repast :
 Bruis'd galls, dry'd roses, thyme and centuary join,
 And raisins ripen'd on the Pfithian vine.
 Besides, in meads the plant Amellus grows, 315 }
 And from one root thick stalks profusely throws,
 Which easily the wand'ring simpler knows :
 Its top a flow'r of golden hue displays,
 Its leaves are edg'd with violet-tinctur'd rays ;
 Rough is the taste ; round many an holy shrine 320
 The sacred priests its beauteous foliage twine :
 This, where meand'ring Mella laves the plains,
 Or in the new-thorn valley, seek the swains ;
 Its roots infuse in wine, and at their door
 In baskets hang the medicated store. 325

But should your stock decay thro' dire disease,
 Nor hope remain new families to raise,
 Hear the strange secret I shall now impart,
 The great Arcadian master's matchless art ;
 An art to reproduce th' exhausted store
 From a slain bullock's putrifying gore : 330 }
 I'll to its distant source the wond'rous tale explore.

326. *But should.*] The poet having already spoken of the ways of driving noxious animals from the bees, and of the method of curing their diseases ; now proceeds to describe the manner after which the total loss of them may be repaired ; which, he tells, us was practised by the Egyptians. MARTYN.

Where happy the Canopian nation dwells,
 Where Nile with genial inundation swells,
 Where swains, the meadows while he largely floats, 335
 Around his pastures glide in painted boats,
 From tawny India while he rolls his tides,
 And into seven huge mouths his stream divides,
 And pressing close on quiver'd Persia's clime
 Green Egypt fattens with prolific slime : 340

533. *Canopus.*] The commentators are divided about the meaning of these four verses. Dr. Martyn takes Virgil to mean only a description of the Delta or lower Egypt. Canopus is the west angle of that triangular region ; Pelusium is the east angle, being nearest to Persia ; and the south angle is the point where the Nile is divided to form the Delta. Δ . The circumstance,

Circum pictis vehitur sua rura phaselis

is a very agreeable picture of that country, which during the inundation of the Nile resembles a vast level lake.

340. *Green Egypt.*] The Nile is the greatest wonder of Egypt. As it seldom rains there, this river which waters the whole country by its regular inundations, supplies that defect, by bringing, as a yearly tribute, the rains of the other countries ; which made a poet say ingeniously, the Egyptian pastures, how great soever the drought may be, never implore Jupiter for rain.

*Te propter nullos tellus tua postulat imbres,
 Arida nec pluvio supplicat herba Jovi.*

Tibull. B. i. 7. 25.

To multiply so beneficent a river, Egypt was cut into numberless canals, of a length and breadth proportioned to the different situation and wants of the lands, the Nile brought fertility every where with its salutary streams ; united cities one with another, and the Mediterranean with the red sea ; maintained trade at home and abroad, and fortified the kingdom against the enemy ; so that it was at once the nourisher and protector of Egypt. The fields were delivered up to it ;
 but

These swains, when grows extinct their honied race,
 Sure hope and refuge in this practice place.
 First for the work they chuse a narrow ground,
 With streighten'd walls and roof embrac'd around :
 Fronting the winds four windows add, to strike 345
 Athwart the twilight space their beams oblique :
 Then seek in prime of youth a lusty steer,
 Whose forehead crooked horns begins to wear ;
 His mouth and nostrils stop, the gates of breath,
 And buffet the indignant beast to death ; 350

but the cities that were raised with immense labour, and stood like islands in the midst of the waters, look down with joy on the plains which were overflowed, and at the same time enriched by the Nile.

This is a general idea of the nature and effects of this river, so famous among the ancients.

There cannot be a finer sight than it affords at two seasons of the year. For if a man ascends some mountain, or one of the largest pyramids of Grand Cairo, in the months of July and August, he beholds a vast sea, in which numberless towns and villages appear, with several causeys leading from place to place, the whole interspers'd with groves and fruit trees, whose tops are only visible, all which forms a delightful prospect. This view is bounded by mountains and woods, which terminate, at the utmost distance the eye can discover, the most beautiful horizon that can be imagined. On the contrary, in winter, that is to say, in the months of January and February, the whole country is like one continued scene of beautiful meadows, whose verdure enamell'd with flowers charms the eye. The spectator beholds, on every side, flocks and herds dispersed over all the plains, with infinite numbers of husbandmen and gardeners. The air is then perfumed by the great quantity of blossoms on the orange, lemon, and other trees ; and is so pure, that a wholsomer and more agreeable is not found in the world : so that nature, being then dead, as it were, in all other climates, seems to be alive only for so delightful an abode.

ROLLIN'S Ancient History, page 13, 8vo, 1749.

Till the bruis'd bowels burst with many a stroke,
 But still th' external skin remains unbroke ;
 Then leave him dead ; his putrid limbs below,
 Green twigs and thyme, and recent cassia strew.
 Be this perform'd when zephyr's balmy breeze 355
 First curls the surface of the smiling seas,
 Ere bloom the meads in crimson vesture dress,
 Ere swallows twitter o'er the new-built nest.
 The tainted juices, in this prison pent,
 Begin to boil, and thro' the bones ferment ; 360
 A wond'rous swarm strait from the carcase crawls,
 Of feeble and unfinish'd animals ;
 Anon their infant buzzing wings they try,
 And more and more attempt the boundless sky :
 At last embody'd from their birth-place pour, 365
 Thick as from copious clouds a summer-show'r,
 Or flight of arrows, when with twanging bows,
 The Parthians in fierce onset gall their foes.

355. *Zephyris primum* in the original.] This little description of the spring diversifies the subject, and enlivens the dryness of the preceding paragraph.

360. *Begin to boil.*] Nothing can be expressed in a livelier manner, than this generation of the bees ;

Interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus humor.

Such lines as these on a low and indeed a gross subject, shew Virgil's command of language ; the two similes at the end add an ornament and an elegance likewise to the passage. It must be observed, that insects cannot be generated by putrefaction ; carcases are only a proper *nidus* and receptacle for their young : and therefore, the female parent chuses there to lay her eggs, that the warmth of the fermenting juices may help to hatch them.

See REDI de Insectis

What god, ye nine, this art disclos'd to man,
 Say whence this great experiment began? 370
 Sad Aristaeus from sweet Tempe fled,
 His bees with famine and diseases dead,
 And at the spring of sacred Peneus' flood,
 Thus plaining to his sea-green parent flood.

Mother, Cyrene! mother, you who keep 375
 Your wat'ry court beneath this crystal deep,
 Why did you bear me of a race divine,
 Yet stain with sorrows my celestial line?
 If Phoebus be my fire, as you relate,
 Why am I doom'd the sport of angry fate? 380
 How have I lost, O how! your former love?
 Why did you bid me hope to rise to heav'n above?
 Lo! all I gain'd, by cattle, fields and corn,
 (Those works which best this mortal state adorn)
 The fruits of toil and thought intense are lost, 385
 Tho' for my mother I a goddess boast!

Come then, with your own hand uproot my groves,
 My stalls and stables burn, infect my droves,
 My harvests murder, cut each blooming vine,
 Since at my rising honours you repine. 390
 His wondering mother heard the mournful sound,
 Low in the chambers of the waves profound.
 The nymphs around her plac'd, their spindles ply'd,
 And spun Milesian wool, in verdure deeply dy'd.
 Ligea, Xantho, Drymo, Spio, fair; 395
 Thalia, and Phyllodoce, whose hair
 Wav'd o'er their snowy shoulders in the air; }

395. *Ligea, Xantho.*] There are but eighteen nymphs
 mentioned

Nesaca, Ephyre, with Opis, thee !

And, her that calms the waves, Cymmōdoce ;

The yellow maid, Lycorias, and the bride 400

Cydippe, who Lucina's pangs had try'd ;

Clio, and Beroë, sea-born both, behold,

Both clad in spotted skins and radiant gold ;

Deïope, and Arethuse, the chaste,

No more intent to pierce the flying beast. 405

There Clymene sung Vulcan's fruitless cares,

The luscious thefts, and soft deceits of Mars ;

And how from Chaos old, all-mighty Love

Had fill'd the bosom of each god above.

While thus they toil'd, enchanted with the strain, 410

His voice alarm'd his mother's ears again ;

The listening sisters heard unusual groans

Amaz'd, and started from their crystal thrones :

mentioned by Virgil in this account of Cyrene's grotto ; including Clymene and Cyrene herself ; of which passage Mr. Dryden says, The poet here records the names of fifty river nymphs, and for once I have translated them all.

POLYMETIS, page 316. note 46.

406. *Vulcan's fruitless cares.*] Some of the graver critics make an observation, which the ladies must needs think unjust and satyrical. When Dido gives a feast to Aeneas, her physician Iopas entertains the company, which were chiefly composed of men and strangers, with a song on a philosophical subject. But, say they, where Virgil introduces a nymph singing to her mistress Cyrene, and to her fellow virgins, she describes to them the loves of Mars and Venus : the *dulcia furta* were the subject that sweetened their labours at the loom. The poet hints at the topics which employ the conversation of the ladies when they are alone by themselves. The commentators, who make such unfair reflections, must doubtless be a set of ill-bred, abusive fellows, that know very little of the world, and less of the ladies.

But Arethuse first heav'd her beauteous head
 Above the waves ; and, O Cyrene, said, 415
 Well might'st thou fear these echoing sounds of woe,
 These sorrows from thy Aristaeus flow ;
 Thy darling care mourns by thy father's flood,
 And calls thee cruel, and complains aloud.
 Pitying the youth, the fear-struck mother said, 420
 My son, O quickly, quickly hither lead, }
 To him 'tis given the courts of gods to tread.
 At once she bids the swelling rivers cleave,
 Th' obedient floods an ample entrance leave ;
 Down thro' the deeps he goes, on either hand 425
 The congregated waves like mountains stand.
 Now wondering at the wat'ry realms he went,
 At dashing lakes in hollow caverns pent,
 His mother's palace, and the sounding woods,
 And deaf'ning roar of subterraneous floods. 430
 Amaz'd he saw, this spacious globe below,
 Deep in its bed each mighty river flow,
 Phasis, and Lycus, and the fruitful head, [spread ;
 Whence burst Enipeus' streams, whence father Tiber's]

423. *Rivers.*] The descent of Aristaeus into the earth, is founded on an ancient superstition of the Egyptians. Servius tells us, that on certain days sacred to the Nile, boys born of holy parents, were delivered to the nymphs by the priests ; who, when they were grown up, and returned back, reported, that there were groves under the earth, and an immense water containing all things, and from whence every thing is procreated.

432. *Deep.*] This is one of the most sublime passages in Virgil. Nothing can strike the imagination more strongly, than to conceive a person entering the bowels of the earth, and at once hearing and seeing the most celebrated rivers in the

Whence Hypanis, that swiftly-pouring roars

435

With thundering billows on his rocky shores;

Whence Anio's and Caicus' copious urns,

Whence bull-fac'd Po adorn'd with gilded horns,

Than whom no river, thro' such level meads

Down to the sea with swifter torrents speeds.

440

Now to the vaulted chamber was he come,

Where hanging pumice form'd an awful dome ;

When fond Cyrene ask'd him of his woe,

And whence those bitter tears began to flow.

the world bursting forth from their several sources. The rough and horrible scenes of rocks, caves, and waters which Aristæus passes thro', are at last finely softened by the kind reception he meets with from his mother, and the graceful appearance of the nymphs spinning and singing the loves of the gods. Fracastorius has a descent into the earth in search of metals, where, no doubt, he had Virgil in his eye; and in which he has been followed by Dr. Garth, in the Dispensary.

438. *Eridanus—the Po.*] This passage cannot be better explained than by quoting the following words from Mr. Spence in his *Polymetis* :

“ But there is another thing in it, with which I am not yet satisfied : and that is, Virgil's calling the Po here, the most violent of all rivers. I know one of the most celebrated and most ingenious writers of our age has endeavoured to soften this, by understanding it only of the rivers in Italy. But (not to enquire at all whether the Po be really the most violent of all the rivers in Ital) how can Virgil be understood of the rivers of one country only, where he is expressly speaking of all the rivers of the world ? and of one common point, from whence all their sources were anciently supposed to be derived ?

I am not quite clear as to that expression, replied *Polymetis* : but to answer you as far as I can, I must give you the opinion of a man whom you both know ; and whose name I need not mention to you, when I have told you it is the person who understands Virgil in a more masterly manner, than perhaps any

one

The sisters, water from the purest spring, 445
 And towels soft, with haste officious bring ;
 Prepare full bowls, and heap up choicest meats ;
 The altars blaze with rich Arabian sweets.
 Of Lydian wine, she cry'd, these goblets take,
 To Ocean let us due libations make ; 450
 At once to Ocean old, in ritual lays,
 Parent of all things, she devoutly prays ;
 And to the sister nymphs, whose gentle sway
 An hundred groves, an hundred streams obey ;
 Thrice o'er the fire the liquid nectar throws, 455
 Thrice to the shining roof the flames arose.
 She thus, with that auspicious omen fir'd ;
 In the Carpathian gulf there dwells retir'd
 The prophet Proteus ; o'er the wat'ry way,
 Whose car the finny, two-legg'd steeds convey : 460

one in this age. It is his opinion, (with all that modesty, with which he generally offers his opinions) that the difficulty you mention may possibly be got over, by the expression joined with it ; *per pinguis culta*. The most violent rivers in the world are such as run, or fall, through a chain of mountains ; and (not to speak of any of the Apennine rivers, or rather torrents, in Italy itself) the Isar which we cross so often in the two or three last days journey before we enter Italy, is (in all that part of its course,) much more violent and more disturbed than the Po : but the Po, you know, very soon after its source, flows on thro' the vale of Piedmont, and afterwards traverses all the rich vale of Lombardy. These are the *pinguis culta*, which Virgil speaks of : almost the whole course of the Po is through such rich low ground : and perhaps there may not be any river in the world, which has almost all its course through so fat and rich a soil, which is so violent as the Po is."

POLYMETIS, Dial. 14. p. 232.

454. *An hundred groves.*] I follow the sense given to this passage in the *Arcadia del Sammarzaro*, *Prosa* 10.

Now to his distant country he resorts,
Emathia seeking, and Pallene's ports ;
The sea-nymphs this caerulean seer adore,
And him reveres ev'n hallow'd Nereus hoar ; 464
All things he knows, tho' hid in time's dark womb,
What is, what long is past, and what shall come ;
So Neptune will'd ; whose monstrous herds he keeps,
Of squalid calves, beneath the rolling deeps.
Him must thou chain, and force him to disclose
The cause and cure of thy distracting woes. 470
Nought he'll unfold, except the god thou bind,
Nor prayers, nor tears can move his steadfast mind.
With force and chains, my son, his limbs surround,
These can alone his treach'rous wiles confound.
When the parch'd herbage fades with mid-day heat, 475
And fainting cattle to cool shades retreat,
Myself will lead thee to the close abode,
Where stretcht in slumber, thou may'st seize the god.
Instant he'll try, elusive of the rape,
The varied force of every savage shape ; 480
Become a bristly boar, or tyger fell,
Or like a scaly bloated dragon swell ;
Like a gaunt lion shake a tawny mane,
Or in loud crackling fire escape thy chain ;
Or while thou closely grasp'st thy fraudulent prey, 485
Chang'd to a flowing stream glide swift away.

459. *Proteus.*] This fable of Proteus is imitated by Virgil, from the fourth book of the *Odysssey* ; where Menelaus is sent to consult the same deity, by the advice and assistance of his own daughter Eidothea.

Yet still retentive with redoubled might,
 Thro' each vain fleeting form constrain his flight;
 Till the same shape, all changes past, appear,
 That ere the senior slept, thou saw'st him wear. 490
 She spoke, and o'er him rich ambrosia shed,
 With liquid odours bath'd his breathing head,
 And thro' his glowing limbs celestial vigour spread. }

Deep in the mountain lies a spacious cave,
 Worn by the workings of the restless wave, 495
 Whither vast waters drive before the wind,
 And shatter'd ships commodious shelter find.
 There, far within a grot, old Proteus dwells,
 And draws a vast rock o'er his secret cells.
 She plac'd her son beneath the darksome roof, 500
 Herself, involv'd in clouds, retires aloof.

Now rabid Sirius scorcht the gasping plains,
 And burnt intense the panting Indian swains;
 In his 'mid course the sun all fiery stood,
 Parcht was the grass, the rivers bak'd to mud; 505
 When Proteus, weary of the waters, fought
 The cool retirement of his 'custom'd grott;

494. *Deep in the mountain.*] The reader may compare this description of the cave of Proteus, with the following one in Spenser.

His bowre is in the bottome of the maine,
 Under a mighty rock, gainst which do rave
 The roling billows in their proud disdaine;
 That, with the angry working of the wave,
 Therein is eaten out an hollow cave,
 That seemes rough masons hand with engines keene
 Had long while laboured it to engrave.

F. Q. 3. C. 8. S. 37

The finny race exulting round him play,
 And in wild gambols dash the bitter spray;
 The scaly phocæ, sunk in sleep profound, 510
 Along the shore their guardian god surround;
 He (like a peasant skill'd the herds to keep,
 When evening homeward warns the calves and sheep,
 When hungry wolves, with pleasure listening, hear,
 And mark for prey, the lambs that bleat from far) 515
 With watchful eyes, high seated on a rock,
 Reviews and counts the numbers of his flock.
 The lucky youth with this occasion blest,
 Just as the seer compos'd his limbs to rest,
 Rush'd on him with a mighty threatening sound, 520
 And fast, the weary, slumbering senior bound.
 He, every various art dissembling tries,
 And many a monster's direful shape belies;
 Roars horrid like a prowling savage, glows
 Like crackling fire, or like a river flows; 525
 But when no fraud could further his escape,
 He spoke, return'd to human voice and shape:
 Rash youth! who bade thee to my court repair
 With impious boldness? what thou seek'st, declare!
 O Proteus! well thou know'st the cause, he cry'd,
 Nought from thy piercing eyes, can mortals hide; 531

509. *Spray.*] The circumstance of these monsters scattering the spray of the sea about them, greatly enlivens this beautiful sea-piece.

512. *Like a peasant.*] Virgil has imitated Homer so nicely in his adventure with Proteus, that he has not forgot this simile of the shepherd, in his copy. *Lupos acuum* is wonderfully expressive, and short.

Obedient to the gods, I seek to know
 What fate decrees, and how to heal my woe.
 The prophet, while his bosom boil'd with ire,
 And while his green eyes shot indignant fire, 535
 Gnashing his teeth, with fury in his look,
 Compell'd, at length, the fates disclosing, spoke :
 'Thou suffer'st for atrocious crimes ; on thee
 Falls the just vengeance of a deity ;
 Unhappy Orpheus on thy guilt hath sent, 540
 And more dost thou deserve, this punishment ;
 And more shalt feel, unless by fate deny'd,
 For still he rages for his murder'd bride.
 She from thy arms, by headlong fear misled,
 Swift o'er the river's verdant margin fled ; 545
 Nor at her feet the fated fair descry'd
 The dreadful snake that kept its grassy side.
 But with loud shrieks her sister-dryads moan'd,
 And high Pangaea's utmost mountains groan'd ;
 Their cries to Rhodope and Thrace were borne, 550
 The Getae, Hebrus, Orithyia mourn.
 He on the desert shore all lonely griev'd,
 And with his concave shell his love-sick heart reliev'd ;
 To thee, sweet wife, still pour'd the piteous lay,
 Thee, sung at dawning, thee at closing day ! 555

548. *But with loud shrieks.*] Virgil does not at length describe the serpents stinging and killing Eurydice. This from the pen of a lower genius, would have taken up twenty lines. He contents himself with saying—*alta non vidit herba* ; and adds immediately,

At chorus aequalis Dryadum.

554. *To thee.*] There are few things in the ancient poetry
 more

Ev'n hell's wide jaws he ventur'd to explore,
Deep gates of Dis, and Death's tremendous shore ;
Down to the Manes went, and chearless plains, [reigns ;
The grove where horror frowns, and hell's dread monarch

more moving than the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. It hath acquired new beauties by falling into the hands of the tender and passionate Virgil ; and is told by him in so melting a strain, that some of the touches he hath given it can hardly be read without tears. When we are wrought up to such a temper, it naturally leads us to compassionate the hard fate of the unhappy lovers ; and we begin to feel some indignation at the capitious condition, upon which he was to possess his beauty, or lose her for ever : not to look at his loved Eurydice. Arbitrary and capricious ! unbecoming the just brother of Jove, and unlike the bounties of a divine, unenvious nature : unless indeed there be something else understood than appears : some truth in life or morals that lies latent under this circumstance of the tale.

The great and unhappy Lord Verulam, who was sensible of the incongruity, has given an explication of the fable ; but seems not to have hit upon the real meaning. What he says is entertaining and beautiful : for he was a spirit of that high order that go ingeniously wrong, and who cannot err without instruction. But I incline to think that the moral of the fiction is rather to be learned at an ordinary music-meeting, or an unmeaning opera, than, where his lordship directs us, in the recesses of an abstruse philosophy.

Orpheus's mistress was music. The powers of it are enchanting. It lulls the reason, and raises the fancy in so agreeable a manner, that we forget ourselves while it lasts. The mind turns dissolute and gay, and hugs itself in all the deluding prospects and fond wishes of a golden dream. Whilst every accent is warbled over by a charming voice, a silly song appears sound morality, and the very words of the opera pass for sense, in presence of their accompaniment. But no sooner does the music cease, than the charm is undone, and the fancies disappear. The first sober look we take of it breaks the spell ; and we are hurried back with some regret to the common dull road of life, when the florid illusion is vanish'd. BLACKWELL'S enquiry concerning the life and writings of Homer, Sect. 11.

Obdurate hearts ! to whom unmov'd by woes . . . 560
 Pray'rs plead in vain, and sorrow useless flows.
 Struck with his song, from Erebus profound,
 Light flitting ghosts, and spirits flock'd around ;
 Thick as the birds to leafy groves descend,
 When evening clouds, or wintry storms impend ; 565
 Mothers and husbands, heroes' awful shades,
 Sweet infant boys, and pure unmarried maids,
 Youths whose fond parents saw their bloom expire,
 And forrowing plac'd them on the funeral pyre ;
 Whom black Cocytus' sullen waters bound, 570 }
 Foul shores with mud with reeds unsightly crown'd, }
 And the nine streams of winding Styx surround ; }
 Ev'n these dread mansions listen'd with amaze ;
 With awe, death's deepest dungeons heard his lays ;
 Struck were the snake-crown'd Furies, Cerberus shews
 His jaws wide-gaping, yet in act to close ; 576
 A pause of rest the sad Ixion found,
 His wheel stopt sudden at the powerful sound.
 And now at length no farther toil remain'd,
 The upper air Eurydice regain'd, 580 }
 Behind she came, so Proserpine ordain'd : }
 When strait a frenzy the fond lover caught,
 (Could Hell forgive, 'twas sure a venial fault)
 Ev'n on life's confines, impotent of mind,
 He stopt, alas ! and cast one look behind. 585

585. *He stopt—and cast.*] The philosophic goddess of
 Boethius having related the story of Orpheus, who when he
 had recovered his wife from the dominions of death, lost
 her again by looking back upon her in the confines of light,
 concludes

Fell Pluto's terms he broke ! his hopes were lost !
 A groan thrice echoed o'er Avernus' coast.
 Ah ! who destroys us both, the sadly cry'd,
 What madness, Orpheus, tears thee from thy bride ?
 The cruel fates force me again away ! 590
 My swimming eyes no more discern the day ;
 Adieu ! no longer must thou bless my fight —
 I go ! I sink ! involv'd in thickest night !
 In vain I stretch my feeble arms to join
 Thy fond embrace ; ah ! now no longer thine ! 595
 Swift from his ardent gaze, while thus she spoke,
 She vanish'd into air, like subtle smoke,
 And left him catching at her empty ghost,
 Desiring much to say, in speechless sorrow lost :
 The rigid ferryman of hell no more 600
 Would deign to waft him to the gloomy shore :

concludes with a very elegant and forcible application ; Whoever you are that endeavour to elevate your mind to the illuminations of heaven, consider yourselves as represented in this fable ; for he that is once so far overcome, as to turn back his eye towards the infernal caverns, loses, at the first sight, all that influence that attracted him on high.

*Vos haec fabula respicit,
 Quicunque in superum diem,
 Mentem ducere quaeritis.
 Nam qui tartareum in specus,
 Visus lumina flexerit,
 Quicquid praecipuum trahit,
 Perdit, dum videt inferos.*

The Rambler, Numb. 178.

587. *Thrice echoed.*] ——— *Terque fragor stagnis auditus Avernus*, says the original very finely. A certain dismal and hollow sound was heard through the vaults of hell. Some imagine, but I think groundlessly, that it was the shout of ghosts rejoicing for Eurydice's return. Surely the other sense is far the more poetical and more forcibly imagined.

What should he do ? where turn ? how seek relief ?
 Twice lost his consort, how appease his grief ?
 How move the Manes, with what doleful note ?
 She sail'd, already cold, in Charon's boat. 605
 For seven long months, by desert Strymon's side,
 Beneath a lofty rock, he mourn'd his bride,
 And stretcht in gelid caverns, with his song
 Made tygers tame, and drew hard oaks along.
 As Philomel in poplar shades, alone, 610
 For her lost offspring pours a mother's moan,
 Which some rough ploughman marking for his prey,
 From the warm nest, unfledg'd, hath dragg'd away ;
 Percht on a bough, she all night long complains,
 And fills the grove with sad repeated strains. 615
 No second fair, no nuptial rites could move,
 Nought soften his distracted mind to love :
 The Hyperborean ice he wander'd o'er,
 And solitary roam'd round Tanais' shore,
 And Scythia's deserts of eternal frost, 620
 Lamenting his lost bride, and Pluto's favours lost.
 The Thracian dames enrag'd to be despis'd,
 As Bacchus' midnight feasts they solemniz'd,
 Inspir'd with frantic fury seiz'd the swain,
 And strew'd his mangled carcase o'er the plain : 625

610. *As Philomel.*] Is not Proteus too great a poet in this simile ? But the lines are some of the most exquisite in Virgil. To heighten the pathetic, the birds are not only *implumes*, but taken from the nest. Nor are they singly *taken*, but *dragged* out of the nest ; to which they *clung back* : which is strongly implied by the word *detraxit*. The verse cannot be read without laying a particular emphasis on this word, as well as on *durus*.

His pale head from his ivory shoulders torn,
 Adown Oeagrian Hebrus' tide was borne ;
 As in the rapid waves it roll'd along,
 Ev'n then with faltering voice and feeble tongue,
 To name his poor Eurydice he try'd, 630
 Eurydice, with parting breath he cry'd, }
 Eurydice ! the rocks and echoing shores reply'd. }
 He spoke ; and 'mid the waves his body hurl'd,
 About his head the foaming waters curl'd.
 Not so Cyrene ; to assuage his fears, 635
 My son, she cries, allay thy restless cares ;
 Behold the cause of all this dire disease ;
 The nymphs have sent destruction on thy bees,
 With whom Eurydice was wont t' advance,
 And lead in lofty groves the sacred dance. 640

633. *He spoke.*] Though the episode of Orpheus and Eurydice be so admirable in itself, that we thank the poet for having introduced it at any rate : yet, after all is it not stich'd in a little inartificially ? Is it to be conceived that Proteus, who, being made a prisoner, and speaking by constraint, is in no very good humour, should tell this long story (which is not very material to the point neither) to entertain Aristaeus, who has offered that violence to him ? Was it not enough to inform him, that his misfortune was occasioned by Eurydice's death, without telling all these circumstances consequent of it ? Perhaps it may be reply'd, that it is more material to the point than is commonly imagined. These consequences greatly aggravate the guilt of Aristaeus ; and so it was proper enough, if not absolutely necessary, to recite them. Whether this answer be sufficient, or not, I neither know, nor much care. Be it as it will, I would not lose this episode, to be the author of all the best criticisms that ever were, or shall be, written upon the classics.

TRAPP.

Thou suppliant offer gifts, and sue for peace,
 The mild Napaeans will their anger cease;
 But hear me first in order due declare,
 The means to sooth their rage, and frame thy pray'r :
 Select four large and beauteous bulls that crop 645
 Thy verdant pastures on Lyceaus' top,
 Four heifers too, that ne'er have plough'd the field,
 Four altars in the Dryads' temples build ;
 From the slain victims pour the sacred blood,
 And leave their bodies in the shady wood : 650
 When the ninth morn o'er dewy hills shall spring,
 To Orpheus' ghost Lethean poppies bring ;
 With a black ewe Eurydice adore,
 And shed for her a victim-heifer's gore :
 Revisit then the grove. Without delay 655
 He speeds his mother's precepts to obey ;
 Hastes to the temple, there his altars builds, [fields :
 Four bulls, four heifers leads, that ne'er had plough'd the
 At the ninth morning's dawn to Orpheus bears
 Th' appointed gifts, and to the grove repairs : 660
 When lo ! a wond'rous prodigy they found,
 An host of bees rush'd forth with humming sound,
 By the slain bullocks' putrid bowels form'd,
 From whose burst sides, in clouds immense they swarm'd ;

663. *Putrid bowels.*] Observe how the poet in the original has varied his expressions on a subject so difficult to be ornamentally expressed as this birth of the bees, for,

— *liquefacta trum per viscera toto* —

— *et ruptis effervere costis* —

is quite newly expressed from what it was before in the passage above, *Interea teneris tepefactus in ossibus humor.*

Then from a tree's high top, conglob'd depend, 665

Whose branches with the bellying cluster bend,

Thus, have I sung the labours of the swain,

Of trees, of flocks, of cattle and of grain ;

While mighty Caesar to Euphrates bears

His conquering arms, the thunder of his wars ; 670

To all the willing world new laws decrees ;

And ardent presses on, th' Olympian heights to seize,

Then me, Parthenope's calm pleasures blest,

And studious leisure and ignoble rest ;

Who bold in youth, once sung the shepherds loves, 675

Sung thee, OTityrus, stretcht beneath the beechen groves.

673. *Parthenope.*] There may be a propriety in this that is not generally remarked. Naples was a town of indolence and pleasure, and was therefore, as some suppose, said to have been founded by Parthenope one of the Sirens, who were goddesses of indolence and pleasure :

Improba fides
Desidia — — —
Otiosa Neapolis.

HOR.

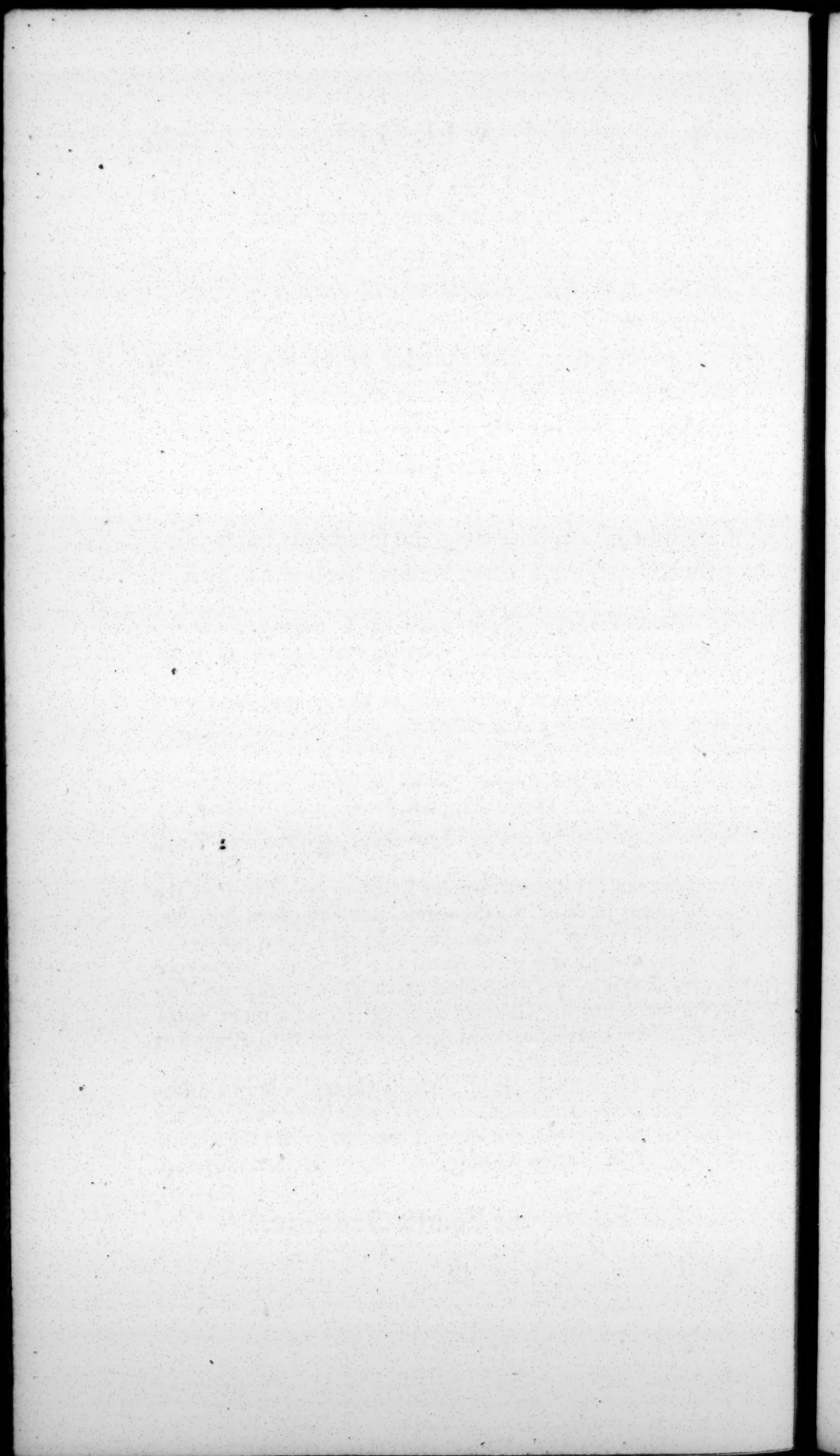
This idea too makes the contrast between Augustus and Virgil much the stronger.

SPENCE.

673. *Then me.*] I cannot forbear being of opinion that the four concluding lines of the Georgics, *illo Virgilium, &c. &c.* are of the same stamp and character with the four justly-exploded ones, which are prefixed to the Aeneid. *Audaxque juvenis* is, I think, an expression entirely unworthy of Virgil, and a mere botch. Besides nothing can be a more complete and sublime conclusion than that compliment to Augustus — *Viamque affectat Olympo.*

676. *Groves.*] Each book of Virgil's Georgics is in a different stile (or has a different colouring) from all the rest. That of the first is *plain* ; of the second *various* ; of the third, *grand* ; and of the fourth *pleasing*. HOLDSWORTH.

The End of the Fourth GEORGIC.



REFLECTIONS

ON

DIDACTIC POETRY.

THE ancients have left us no rules or observations concerning this species of poetry. Aristotle, chiefly intent on giving laws to dramatic writers, advises the true poet to disappear as much as possible, to write only in dialogue, and never to speak in his own person; because, says he, it may be laid down as a general rule in this art, that when the poet speaks in his own person, he is no longer an imitator. In conformity to this opinion, Castelvetro, the learned Italian commentator on Aristotle's *Poetics*, has declared, that if Virgil had written nothing but the *Georgics*, he ought not to have been enrolled among the number of the poets. For, says he, p. 29. not very much to the honour of the art he is teaching, physiology can never be the subject of poetry, which was invented not to instruct, but barely to amuse and entertain the minds of the multitude. And what was the general opinion of the ancients

on this subject, may be easily known from that story of Socrates related in the *Phaedon* of Plato : who being admonished in a dream to apply himself to music, began to compose an hymn to Apollo, whose feast was then celebrating. But upon afterwards reflecting, that a person who would be a true poet, must make fables (must *create*) and not write mere discourses in metre ; he at once took a common fable from Aesop, not having any inventive faculty himself. And 'tis observable, that Plutarch, after quoting this story of Socrates, excludes Empedocles, Parmenides, Nicander, and Theognis, out of the number of legitimate poets ; because, adds he, we know there may be sacrifices without music and dancing, but there can be no true poetry or imitation, without fiction and fables. This severe remark, which seems not to be founded on nature and truth, would effectually exclude all didactic and descriptive poetry. Surely the poet is an imitator, when he paints any object of universal nature, animate or inanimate, whether he speaks in his own person or introduces speakers ; tho' indeed imitations of the latter species have not the same dignity or utility with those of human manners, passions, and characters.

To render instruction amiable, to soften the severity of science, and to give virtue and knowledge a captivating and engaging air, is the great privilege of the didactic muse ; 'tis she, who

—————*praespargens ante Viâ
Cuncta coloribus egregiis, et odoribus opplet.*

LUCRETIUS.

Profess'd teaching is highly disagreeable to the natural pride of man, as it implies a superiority of understanding over the person instructed. That precepts

may gain an easy admission into the heart, it is necessary to deliver them in a concealed indirect manner, divested of all pretensions to a larger share of reason, and of all dogmatical stiffness. A man who peruses any system, written in this modest unassuming method, and adorned moreover with striking images and harmonious numbers,

—*discit citius, meminitque libentius.* HOR.

As material objects are most susceptible of poetical ornaments, so perhaps, the various employments, businesses, and amusements of life, together with the elegant arts and sciences, are more proper subjects for didactic poetry, than such as are purely speculative and metaphysical. Abstract ideas admit but of few embellishments. All parts of natural philosophy in particular, as being conversant about sensible images, seem the best calculated to shine in this way of writing;

—*Coelique vias et sidera monstrant,
Defectus solis varios, lunaeque labores :
Unde tremor terris, qua vi maria alta tument
Objicibus ruptis rursusque in seipsa resident ;
Quid tantum oceano properent se tingere soles :
Hyberni, vel quae tardis mora noctibus obstet.*

We have some elegant but short specimens of this sort in the *Musae Anglicanae* : such are the poems on a barometer, on the circulation of the blood, on the telescope, and on Dr. Hales's vegetable statics.

In making choice of a proper subject, regard should be had, to fix, if possible, upon one of an important and universal nature ; and which may deeply interest all mankind. Such is Dr. Armstrong's poem on the art of preserving health. And after this interesting subject is chosen, only such rules relating to it should be selected, as will bear

to be delivered gracefully; and to be enlivened with poetical imagery. It is not required or expected of a poet, to enter into a minute detail of dry precepts, but to single out those precepts, that will entertain as well as instruct his reader.

—et quæ

Desperat tractata nitefcere poffe, relinquit. HOR.

Mr. Addifon obferves, that there are feveral ways of conveying the fame truth to the mind of man; and to chufe the pleafanteft of thefe ways, is that which chiefly diftinguifhes poetry from profe, and makes Virgil's rules of husbandry pleasanter to read than Varro's. Where the profe writer tells us plainly what ought to be done, the poet often conceals the precept in the description, and represents his countryman performing the action in which he would instruct his reader. Where the one fets out as fully and diftinctly as he can, all the parts of the truth which he would communicate to us, the other fingles out the moft pleafing circumftance of this truth, and fo conveys the whole, in a more diverting manner to the underftanding.

The delicate address of Virgil in this particular is worth our attention; of which the following inftances may be given. Inftead of telling his husbandman plainly, that his crops will fail by bad manage meat; he fays,

*Hæc magnum alterius frustra fpectabis acervum,
Concuſſaque famem in ſylvis ſolabere quer cu.*

Inftead of faying, that elms by engrafting have borne acorns, he fpeaks of that operation in this lively manner:

— *Glandemque ſues fregerè ſub ulmis.*

Inftead

Instead of informing us that the farmers often root up an old forest, he adorns this proceeding with the following picturesque circumstances :

*Antiquasque domos avium cum stirpibus imis
Eruit ; illae altum nidis petiere relictis.*

He does not call the plane a large tree, but says,

Jamque ministrantem platanum potantibus umbram.

And instead of ordering the farmer to water his grounds, what a landscape does he present us with !

*Ecce, supercilio clivosi tramitis undam
Elicit : illa cadens raucum per laevia murmur
Saxa ciet, scatebrisque arentia temperat arva !*

After this manner should the didactic poet raise and enliven every precept he gives ; he should turn *rules* into *images* ; he should describe things by their effects ; and speak of them as already done, instead of regularly ordering the manner in which they should be done ; and throw in circumstances and adjuncts, that may forcibly strike the imagination, and embellish and conceal the dryness of the subject.

But altho' the poet delivers his precepts in the most artful manner imaginable, and renders them as palatable as possible, yet the reader will soon be disgusted with a continued series of instruction, if his mind be not relieved at proper intervals by pleasing digressions of various kinds, naturally arising from the main subject, and closely connected with it. If Virgil had confined himself merely to agriculture, and had never inserted in his poem the prodigies that attended the death of Julius Caesar, the praises of Italy ; the chariot-race, the Scythian winter-piece, the happiness of a country-life, the loves of the beasts, and the pathetic description of the plague among the cattle ; his *Georgics*, tho'

abounding in most useful rules, delivered with dignity and grace united, would never have been the delight and admiration of his own, and all succeeding ages. His art is no where more remarkable than in those passages, where, after seeming to have left his subject and his husbandmen, he suddenly returns to them, and connects all he has been saying, though he appears to have wandered far from his purpose, by adding some rural circumstance ; thus having spoken of the battle of Pharsalia, he subjoins immediately with great address,

*Scilicet & tempus veniet cum finibus illis
Agricolae, incurvo terram molitus aratro
Exesa inveniet scabra rubigine pila ;
Aut gravibus rastris galeas pulsabit inanes,
Grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulchris.*

And again, after saying the world was distracted with many wars, he instantly adds,

————— *Non ullus aratro
Dignus honos* ——— ———

————— Thus Maro's muse,
Thrice sacred muse ! commodious precepts gives,
Instructive to the swains ; not only bent
On what is gainful, sometimes she diverts
From solid counsels, shews the force of love
In savage beasts ; how virgin face divine
Attracts the hapless youth thro' storms and waves,
Alone in deep of night ; then she describes
The Scythian winter, nor disdains to sing
How under ground the rude Riphæan race,
Mimic brisk cyder with the brake's product wild,
Sloes pounded, hips, and servis' harshest juice.

PHILIPS's Cyder, B. I.

This

This last mentioned author, among other classica beauties, hath closely copied Virgil in throwing many artful digressions into his poem. He opens his second book with an address to Lord Harcourt's son, then abroad upon his travels in Italy, and afterwards returns to his subject with great dexterity in the following lines:

Mean while (altho' the Massic grape delights,
Pregnant of racy juice, and Formian hills
Temper thy cups, yet) wilt thou not reject
Thy native liquors; lo! for thee my mill
Now grinds choice apples, and the British vats
O'erflow with generous cyder. Book 2.

This poet speaking afterwards of the pernicious effects of drunkenness, and of the discords and quarrels arising from this vice, slides with great art and address into a description of the civil wars and dissensions that have frequently troubled the repose of this kingdom. And when he comes to mention the last great rebellion, very dexterously flings in the following line:

Yet was the cyder land unstain'd with guilt.

This at once recalls the mind of the reader to the subject, which the author seemed to have forsaken, during so long a digression. Of the same kind are his descriptions of the destruction of old Ariconium, the praises of Herefordshire; the moral characters of the most celebrated poets, at the conclusion of the first, and the effects of the union at the end of the second book: where, after saying, that

———Where'er the British spread
Triumphant banners, or their fame has reach'd
Diffusive to the utmost bounds of this
Wide universe, ——

he concludes fully and appositely to his subject,

——— Silurian cyder borne,

Shall please all tastes, and triumph o'er the vine.

But of all the various kinds of digressions, those of a pathetic nature, if they can be introduced with propriety, will have the best effect. A moving tale, such as the history of Orpheus and Eurydice in the fourth book of the *Georgics*, is most likely to render a didactic poem interesting. A stroke of passion is worth a hundred of the most lively and glowing descriptions. Men love to be moved, much better than to be instructed. Supposing (says the Abbè du Bos) that the subject of a didactic poem is so exceedingly curious, as to induce you to read it once over with great pleasure; yet you will never peruse it a second time with the same satisfaction. you taste even from an eclogue. The understanding feels no pleasure in being instructed twice in the same thing; but the heart is capable of feeling the same emotion twice, with great pleasure. This amiable and ingenious writer, who hath struck out many new observations upon poetry, illustrates his opinion, that a poem abounding in the best written descriptions will never deeply affect a reader, except something of the pathetic be added, by the following remarks on a sister art.

“ The finest landscape of Titian or Carrache, does not interest the beholder more than would the real prospect of a village in a disagreeable or pleasant country. There is nothing in such a picture that speaks to one, if I may be allowed the expression. And as it does not touch the heart, it cannot gain the attention. The best painters were so well convinced of this truth, that they have very seldom given us landscapes wholly desert, and without hu-

man figures *. They have peopled their pictures; they have introduced into them persons employed in some action capable of moving us, and by consequence of engaging our attention. This is the constant practice of Poussin, Rubens, and the other great masters, who do not think it sufficient to place in their landscapes a man passing on the road, or perhaps a countrywoman carrying her fruits to market. They introduce men agitated with passions, in order to excite ours, and by such an emotion to interest us and engage our attention. In effect, the figures introduced in these pictures, are more frequently mentioned and talked of, than their trees or terrasses. The landscape which Poussin painted several times over, and which is commonly called his Arcadia, would never have been so celebrated, if it had contained no human figures.

Who has not heard of that famous country, which is said to have been inhabited by the happiest men that ever existed on earth? Men employed only on their
their

* This observation may be illustrated by that fine simile of Milton.

As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air.
Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd from each they met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, FOR HER now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight.

Paradise Lost, B. 9. v. 445.

The beholder's delight is doubled, at the appearance of this living beauty.

their pleasures, and who knew no other disquietudes, than those which beset the imaginary shepherds in romances, whose condition is so much to be envied. The picture of which I am speaking, represents a landscape in this delightful country. In the midst we see the monument of a young virgin, dead in the flower of her age: this we know by means of her statue laid at length on her tomb after the manner of the ancients. The sepulchral inscription is but four Latin words: *and yet I lived in Arcadia. Et in Arcadiâ ego.* But this inscription, short as it is, gives occasion for very serious reflections, to two young men and two young maidens, crowned with chaplets of flowers, who seem to have met accidentally with this mournful monument, in a place where they might well imagine no melancholy object was to be found. One of their company makes the rest take notice of this inscription, by pointing to it with his finger. And one may perceive, in the midst of the affliction and pity that begin to spread themselves over their features, something of the remains of an expiring joy. We imagine we hear the reflections of these young persons on the power of death, who spares neither age, nor beauty; and against whom the happiest climates can afford no protection. We figure to ourselves what touching things they would say to one another, when they recovered from their first surprize, and we apply these things to ourselves, and to those for whom we are concerned. It is in poetry as in painting; and the imitations which poetry makes of nature, touch and affect us, only in proportion to the impression, which the thing imitated would make on our hearts, if we saw it in reality." *

These

* *Reflexions critiques sur le poësie & sur la peinture,*
Tom. 1. p. 55.

DIDACTIC POETRY. 301

These observations, drawn from the art of painting, are as full of good taste, as of solid reflection, and seem to be founded on a knowledge of the human heart ; on which knowledge all true criticism must be founded. They sufficiently evince that without something of the pathetic, something that comes home to our business and bosoms, no didactic poem can possibly be interesting.

As to the style of a didactic poem, which comes next to be considered, it ought certainly to abound in the most bold and forcible metaphors, the most glowing and picturesque epithets ; it ought to be elevated and enlivened by pomp of numbers, and majesty of words, and by every figure that can lift a language above the vulgar and current expressions. One may add, that in no kind of poetry (nay not even in the sublime ode) is a beauty of expression so much to be regarded as in this. For the epic writer should be very cautious of indulging himself in too florid a manner of expression ; especially in the dramatic parts of his fable, where he introduces dialogue. And the writer of tragedy cannot fall into so nauseous and unnatural an affectation †, as to put
laboured

† It may not be improper to produce the following glaring instance of the absurdity of introducing long and minute descriptions into tragedy. When Romeo receives the dreadful and unexpected news of Juliet's death, this fond husband, in an agony of grief, immediately resolves to poison himself. But his sorrow is interrupted, while he gives us an exact picture of the apothecary's shop, from whom he intended to purchase the poison.

I do remember an apothecary,
And hereabout he dwells, whom late I noted,
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling

laboured descriptions, pompous epithets, studied phrases, and high-flown metaphors, into the mouths of his characters. But as the didactic poet speaks in his own person, it is necessary and proper for him to use a more luscious colouring of style, and to be more studious of ornament. And this is agreeable to an admirable precept of Aristotle, which no writer in any kind of composition, be it prose or poetry, should ever forget,—that diction ought most to be laboured in the unactive, that is, the descriptive parts of the poem, in which the opinions, manners and passions of men are not represented; for too glaring an expression obscures the manners and the sentiments. *Τὴν δὲ λέξιν διδιδάσκοντες τοὺς ἀρχαίους μερῶσι, καὶ μήτε ἠθικοῖς, μήτε διανοητικοῖς. ἀποκρυπτε γὰρ πάλιν ἢ λίαν λαμπρὰ λέξεις τὰ ἠθικὰ, καὶ τὰς διανοίας.* Poetics, chap. 24.

Accord-

Culling of simples : meager were his looks,
 Sharp misery had worn him to the bones ;
 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,
 An alligator stuft, and other skins
 Of ill-shap'd fishes ; and about his shelves
 A beggarly account of empty boxes ;
 Green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds,
 Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
 Where thinly scatter'd to make up a shew.

Act 5. Scene 3.

I appeal to those who know any thing of the human heart, whether Romeo in this distressful situation, could have leisure to think of the alligator, empty boxes, and bladders, and other furniture of this beggarly shop, and to point them out so distinctly to the audience. The description is indeed very lively and natural, but very improperly put into the mouth of a person agitated with such passion as Romeo is represented to be.

Accordingly Virgil hath used every possible method of exalting his style into dignity and grace, by bold metaphors, grecisms, striking epithets, and poetical circumlocutions.

Hence is it that he will not say *quo tempore*, but *sydere*, in the very first line of his poem. Hence he says, *scindimus æquor* for ploughing, and *Saturni dente* for the pruning hook. Hence is it that he ascribes human properties and passions to plants and animals.

*Exuerint sylvestrem animam, cultuque frequenti,
In quajcunque voces artes, haud tarda sequuntur.*

Geor. ii. v. 51.

Moerentem abjungens, fraternâ morte juvencum.

Geor. iii. 518.

Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma.

Geor. ii. 82.

Et quis cuique dolor victo, quae gloria palmae,

Georg. iii. 102.

'Tis after this manner Virgil judiciously conceals the nakedness and barrenness of his subject, by the lustre of his language, and gives to Ceres the cestus of Venus. 'Tis thus (to use Addison's words) that he breaks the clods, and tosses the dung about with an air of gracefulness. Or, as Boileau speaks of another, it is thus that he turneth every thing he touches into gold.

I shall now endeavour to point the merit or imperfection of the most celebrated didactic poets, ancient and modern, by giving a short and I hope impartial account of each. I shall begin with Hesiod, whose character has been drawn by Mr. Addison in the following words. "If we may guess, says he, at Hesiod's character from his writings, he had much more of the husbandman than the poet in his temper;

temper: he was wonderfully grave, discreet and frugal; he lived altogether in the country, and was probably, for his great prudence, the oracle of the whole neighbourhood. These principles of good husbandry ran thro' his works, and directed him to the choice of tillage and merchandize, for the subject of that which is the most celebrated of them. He is every where bent on instruction, avoids all manner of digressions, and does not stir out of the field once in the whole Georgic. His method in describing month after month with its proper seasons and employments, is too grave and simple; it takes off from the surprize and variety of the poem, and makes the whole look but like a modern almanack in verse. The reader is carried through a course of weather, and may beforehand guess, whether he is to meet with snow or rain, clouds or sun-shine, in the next description. The descriptions indeed have abundance of nature in them; but then it is nature in her simplicity and undress.—Nor has he shewn more of art or judgment in the precepts he has given us, which are sown so very thick, that they clog the poem too much, and are often so minute and full of circumstances, that they weaken and unnerve his verse. But after all, we are beholden to him for the first rough sketch of a Georgic, where we may still discover something venerable in the antiqueness of the work; but if one would see the design enlarged, the figures reformed, and the colouring laid on, and the whole piece finished, we must expect it from a greater master's hand."

I cannot help thinking, but that Mr. Addison hath placed the merit of this venerable father of didactic poetry rather too low. There is a great beauty in his natural and artless way of writing; and such primæval simplicity, tho' it does not strike

us at first sight so forcibly, as a more laboured and artificial style, yet is infinitely pleasing to one of a just taste, and to any real lover of nature. However Hesiod sometimes rises into great dignity of expression, and has given many instances of true poetry. Of this kind is his account of the iron age, where the goodness of his heart appears in every line; and which concludes with the following admirable verses, describing with a lofty prosopopoeia, ENVY, like a constant companion following all the sons of men, and MODESTY and NEMESIS, retreating from the earth.

Ζηλος δ' ἀνθρώποισιν οἰζυροῖσιν ἀπατιν,
 Δυσκλεῆδος, κακοχαρτος, ομαρήσει συγερῶντες.
 Καὶ τότε δὴ πρὸς οὐμνον ὑπὸ χθονος ἑρυοδείης,
 Λευκοῖσιν φανεῖσσι καλυψάμενῳ χροῶ καλον,
 Ἀθανάτων μετὰ φύλον ἰτὴν, πρὸς λιπὸν ἄνθρωπος,
 Αἰδῶς καὶ Νεμεσις τὰ δὲ λειψέσθαι ἀλγεῶς λυγρῶ
 Θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι· κακὸς δ' ἐκ' ἐσσεῖσθαι ἀλκῇ.

Εργ. καὶ Ημερ. α. 194.

The four last of these lines, in which the goddesses Modesty and Nemesis are described as beautiful personages, arrayed in white robes, are I think more poetical than even Virgil's imitation of them,

———— *extrema per illos*
Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit. Geo. ii.

Neither hath Mr. Addison justly represented our author's description of the cold in the month of January. "The wild beasts, says he, run shivering through the woods with their heads stooping to the ground, and their tails clapt between their legs; the goats and oxen are almost dead with cold." In this translation of Mr. Addison the following fine description of Boreas rushing from the kingdom of Thrace,

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Thrace, throwing down the tallest oaks, and spreading the valleys with uprooted beeches, is totally and unfairly omitted.

Ὅς ἐκ Διὰ Θρηκῆς ἱπποτέρῃς εὐρεῖ πόνῳ,
 Ἐμπνεύσας ὠεῖν· μέμυκε δὲ γαῖα καὶ ὕλη.
 Πολλὰς δὲ δρυὸς ὑψικομὲς, ἐλάας τε παχέας,
 Οὐρεὸς ἐν βήσσης πιλνᾶ, χθονὶ πελυβοτέρῃ
 Ἐμπιπλῶν, καὶ πάσα βοᾷ τότε νηελῆθ' ὕλῃ.

As to the passage which Mr. Addison translates, "The old men too are bitterly pincht with the weather;" I beg leave to think that the words in the original have great dignity, and that it is a stroke of nature, very artfully introduced into the description.

————— τερχαλὸν δὲ γεργίᾳ τιθησι.

Εργ. καὶ Ἡμέρ β. 135.

Our old poet's picture of the spring, and the pleasures to be enjoyed at that delicious season, is indeed not so highly finished as Virgil's (Georg. ii. 323.) yet is very pleasing to the mind, as it gives one so lively an idea of the simple and natural manners of those early ages.

Ἀλλὰ τότε ἦν

Ἐν πετρᾷν τε σκῆν. καὶ βιβλινῶ οἶνῶ,
 Μᾶζα τ' ἀμολγαῖν, γάλα τ' αἰγῶν σβεννυμέναων,
 Καὶ βοὸς ὑλοφαγοῖο κρέας μὴ πῶ τετοκυῖης,
 Πρωτογονῶν τ' εἰρῶν· ἐπὶ δ' αἰθοπα πινέμεν οἶνον,
 Ἐν σκῆν ἐξορμένον, κεκορημένον ἦτορ ἐδωδῆς,
 Ἀντίον εὐκράεθ' ἀνήκε τρεψαντῆα προσώπον,
 Κρήνης τ' ἀνέας καὶ ἀπορρυῖς, ἠτ' ἀβολῶν.

Εργ. καὶ Ἡμέρ βιβ. β. 206.

I shall conclude these remarks on Hesiod with his character, as drawn by Paterculus, lib. i. c. 7. *Vir perelegantis ingenii, et mollissimâ dulcedine carminum memorabilis, otii quietisque cupidissimus, ut tempore tanto viro (Homero scil.) ita operis auctoritate proximus.*

ΕΜΠΕ-

EMPEDOCLES flourished about the 80th olympiad : he was a native of Sicily, and wrote a poem on the nature of things, and the four elements ; the loss of which, if we may judge from some few noble fragments that remain, we have great reason to regret. Even the severe Aristotle speaks of him with great respect, and says, † that he was very Homeric in his manner ; that his style was forcible, well laboured, and full of metaphors ; and that he made use of all the proper methods that could conduce to the beauty of his poetry. One of his fragments is well worthy our attention, as it contains some of the most exalted and spiritualized notions of the deity that are any where to be found in the poetry of the ancient Greeks. He seems to have been ridiculing the absurd notions that prevailed of corporeal gods ; and expressly affirms, that 'tis impossible God can have any parts or members, or any thing resembling the human shape. I hope it will not be deemed pedantry to set down at length so extraordinary a fragment.

ΟΥΤΙ Ξ' ΑΝΔΡΩΜΕΝ ΚΕΡΑΛΗ ΚΤ' ΓΥΙΑ ΚΕΚΑΣΑΙ,
 ΟΥ ΜΕΝ ΑΠΑΙ ΡΩΤΩΝ ΓΕ ΔΥΩ ΚΛΑΔΟΙ ΑΪΣΘΕΣΙΝ,
 ΟΥ ΠΟΔΕΣ, ὃ ΔΟΑ ΓΥΝ, ὃ ΜΗΔΕΑ ΛΑΧΥΝΕΙΛΑ,
 ΑΛΛΑ ΦΡΗΝ ΙΕΡΗ, Κ' ΑΘΕΣΦΑΙΘ' ΕΠΛΕΪΟ ΜΕΝΟΥ,
 ΦΕΡΓΙΣΙ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ ΑΠΑΝΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΪΣΤΟΣΑ ΘΟΗΣΙ.

But what may justly give us the highest idea of this poet, and of the loss the learned world has sustained by the want of his work, is the noble and affectionate character given of him by Lucretius, in a passage, in which the poetry and the panegyric are equally

† Ομπεϊκος Εμπεδοκλής, κ' δεινός περὶ φράσιν γε-
 γόνε, μέγαροεικός τε ὢν, κ' τοῖς ἀλλοῖς τοῖς περὶ ποιη-
 τικὴν ὀπτευγμασι χρωμένος. Aristot. ἐν τῶν περὶ
 ποιητικῶν. Diog. Laer.

equally great. Where after speaking of the wonders of Sicily in very sublime terms, he adds, that nothing which that country had produced was so worthy of attention and admiration, or so truly valuable and illustrious as this incomparable man ;

*Quorum Acragantinus cum primis Empedocles est,
Insula quem Triquetris terrarum gessit in oris,
Quam fluitans circum magnis amfractibus aequor,
Ionium glaucis aspergit virus ab undis ;
Angustoque fretu rapidum mare dividit undis
Aeoliae terrarum oras a finibus ejus.
Hic est vasta Charybdis, et hic Aetnea minantur
Murmura flammaram rursus se colligere in iras
Faucibus eruptos iterum ut vis evomat ignes ;
Ad coelumque ferat flammai fulgura rursus ;
Qua, quem magna modis multis miranda videtur
Gentibus humanis regio, visendaque fertur,
Rebus opima bonis, multâ munera virum vi ;
Nil tamen hoc habuisse viro praeclarius in se,
Nec sanctum magnis, et mirum, carumque videtur.
Carmina quin etiam divini pectoris ejus
Vociferantur, et exponunt praeclara reperta ;
Ut vix humanâ videatur stirpe creatus.*

LUCRETIUS, l. i. 717.

ARATUS, who flourished in the reign of Ptolomy Philadelphus, was the cotemporary and friend of Theocritus* : he composed an astronomical poem on the nature and motion of the stars. Cicero (not probably

* Who addresses his sixth Idyllium to him ;

Δαίμονας καὶ Δαφνίς ο Βωκοχῶτ' εἰς ἐνα χῶρον
Τὰν ἀγέλαν παρ' Ἀετλῆς ; —

and is imagined to speak of his loves in the seventh. This is the poet whom the polite apostle St. Paul quotes to the Athenians, Acts xvii. 28. Τὸ καὶ γένος ἐσμὲν,
We are also his offspring.

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probably the most able judge of poetry, and who translated this work into Latin) says, he writes *ornatissimos atque optimos versus*; but he certainly wants spirit and elevation. Virgil has manifestly borrowed many of his prognostics in the first book, from this writer's phaenomena; and it may be no unpleasing amusement to see how the Roman has improved the images he took from the Greek.

The loud resounding of the sea-coasts, and the noise among the mountains, are mentioned as prognostics of wind by Aratus in the following lines;

Σημα δὲ τοι ἀνεμοῖο, καὶ οἰδανῶσα θαλάσσω
Γινέσθω. καὶ μακρὸν ἐπ' αἰγιαλοὶ βοῶντες,
Ἀκλαὶ τ' ἀναλίοι, ὅπου εὐδαῖοι ἠχέσσω
Γιγνόνται, κορυφαὶ τε βοῶμεναι κρεῖτ' ἀκραί.

Which circumstances Virgil hath plainly borrowed;

*Continuo ventis surgentibus, aut freta ponti
Incipiunt agitata tumescere, et aridus alte
Montibus audiri fragor; aut resonantia longe
Littora misceri, et nemorum increbescere murmur.*

It is obvious that the Roman poet hath added many beauties to his original: such is, the heaving and swelling of the sea, so strongly expressed in words that rise one above another like the waves;

————— *Freta ponti*
Incipiunt agitata tumescere —————

Such is the *aridus fragor*, not to be found in the Greek; and the rustling murmur of the woods, represented by *nemorum increbescere murmur*. Again, Aratus mentions the prognostic of the water-fowl ducking themselves before rain:

Πολλαὶ λιμναῖαι ἢ ἐναιλαὶ ὄρνιθες
Ἀπληστον κλυζεῖν αἰένεμεναι ὑδάσειν.

But

But see what lively and picturesque circumstances Virgil hath added of his own.

*Certatim largos humeris infundere rores ;
Nunc caput objectare fretis, nunc currere in undas,
Et studio incassum videas gestire lavandi.*

Αὐτὰρ ὁ' ἐξ ευροιο καὶ ἐκ νότος ἀσραπτήσιν
Ἀλλοίε δ' ἐκ ζεφυρείο, καὶ ἀλλοίε παρ βορέαο,
Δη ποῖε τις πελαγεὶ ἐνὶ δειδίε ναυίλος ἀνὴρ.

ARATUS.

*At Borcae de parte trucis cum fulminat, et cum
Eurique Zephyrique tonat domus, omnia plenis
Rura natant fossis, atque omnis navita ponto
Humida vela legit.*

The expressions of *trucis*, of *Zephyri domus*, and *plenis rura natant fossis*, are poetical additions. Even the celebrated description of the crows is taken from Aratus.

*Tum liquidas corvi presso ter gutture voces
Aut quater ingeminant ; et saepe cubilibus altis,
Nescio qua praeter solitum dulcedine laeti
Inter se foliis strepitant ; juvat imbris aëtis
Progeniem parvam, dulcesque revisere nidos.*

And it must be granted that the Greek verses are extremely good, and indeed little inferior to Virgil's :

Καὶ κορακὲς μύθοι μὲν, ἐρημαίῳ βοῶντες
Διωακίς αὐτὰρ ἐπεῖτα μέλαθρα κεκληγόντες.
Πλειότεροι δ' ἀγέληδον ἐπὶν κοιτοῖο μεδῶνται,
Φωνῆς ἐμπλοῖοι, χαλεπὴν καὶ τίς ωισοίτο,
Οἷα τὰ μιν, βοῶσι, λυγαινομένοισιν ὁμοῖα.
Πολλὰ δὲ δένδρεοιο πέρι φλοὸν ἀλλοί' ἐπ' αὐτὸν,
Ἥχι τέ κέουσιν καὶ ὑποέρποι ἀπ' ἐρυοῦνται.

But what Virgil adds is purely his own : when he accounts for this unusual joy, by the various effects which the alteration of the air will have on their bodies, in the most perspicuous and beautiful terms :

Haud

*Haud equidem credo quia sit divinitus illis
 Ingenium, aut rerum fata prudentia major;
 Verum, ubi tempestas et coeli mobilis humor,
 Mutavere vias, et Jupiter humidus austris
 Densat, erant quae rara modo, et quae densa relaxat:
 Vertuntur species animorum, et pectora motus
 Nunc alios, alios, dum nubila ventus agebat,
 Concipiunt.*

To express such abstruse notions with so much clearness and grace, is a great instance of Virgil's supreme mastery of language.

On the whole, Aratus appears to have a great deal of nature, but not much dignity and vivacity in his manner. His character is so finely and so justly drawn by Quintilian, and is applicable to so many didactic poets, that I shall give it to the reader without apology for so many quotations: *Arati materia motû caret, ut in quâ nulla varietas, nullus affectus, nulla persona, nulla cujusquam sit oratio; sufficit tamen operi cui se parem credidit.* Instit. Orat. L. 10.

I believe it is scarce possible for a passage of equal length to contain more taste and judgment in it than this: insomuch that there is hardly a fault, which a didactic poet can commit, that is not here hinted at.

OPPIAN lived in the beginning of Commodus's reign, and was afterwards greatly patronized by Severus. He wrote two didactic poems, one upon fishing, called *Halieutica*; the other on hunting, entitled *Cynegetica*. The former is the most celebrated of the two. Rapin tells us, he is a dry prosaic writer. But it is observable, that this critic seldom speaks favourably of the Greek authors; the reason of which may probably be, that liké many a modern critic he did not understand that language; and M. Menage assures us he did not. Scaliger, a
 much

much abler * judge, says of Oppian, that he is an excellent poet; easy, eloquent, sublime and harmonious; that he not only far surpasses Grattus and Nemesianus, who have written on the same subject, but that he seems to have the very air of Virgil, whom he endeavoured particularly to imitate; and that he has given us the truest and liveliest image of that divine poet. Tho' the censures and praises of Scaliger are generally extravagant; and tho' in the present case, he seems to have bestowed his encomiums on Oppian a little too lavishly, yet I believe this writer is well worthy the learned reader's perusal, for many of his descriptions (for instance one of a horse and a battle of furious bulls) are well work'd up and extremely natural and lively.

Thus much may suffice for the Greek didactic poets.

——— *Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo.*

For I am next to speak of LUCRETIVS, whose merit as a poet has never yet been sufficiently displayed, and who seems to have had more fire, spirit and energy, more of the *vivida vis animi*, than any of the Roman poets, not excepting Virgil himself. Whoever imagines, with Tully, that Lucretius had not a great genius, is desired to cast his eye on two pictures he has given us at the beginning of his poem; the first of Venus with her lover † Mars, beautiful to the last degree, and more glowing than any figure painted by Titian;

* The Jesuit Vavassor, in his famous treatise, *de ludicra dictione*, greatly commends Oppian.

† ——— *in gremium qui saepe tuum se
Rejicit, aeterno devinctus vulnere amoris;
Atque ita suspiciens tereti cervice repostâ
Pascit amore avidos inhians in te, dea, visus;
Eque tuo pendet resupini spiritus oris.* L. i. 33.

tian; the † second of the terrible and gigantic figure, the daemon of Superstition, worthy the energetic pencil of Michael Angelo. Neither do I think that the description that immediately follows of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, was excelled by the famous picture of Timanthes on the same subject, of which Pliny speaks so highly in the 35th book of his Natural History: especially the minute and moving circumstances of her perceiving the grief of her father Agamemnon and of the priest's concealing his sacrificing knife, and of the spectators bursting into tears, and her falling on her knees.

*Cui semel infula virgineos circumdata comptos
Ex utrâque pari malarum parte profusa est,
Et moestum simul ante aras astare parentem,
Sensit, et hunc propter ferrum celare ministros,
Aspectuque suo lacrymas effundere cives;
Muta metû terram genibus summissa petebat.*

Lib. i. 88.

Few passages even in Virgil himself are so highly finished, contain such lively descriptions, or are so harmonious in their versification, as where our poet speaks of the fruitfulness occasioned throughout all nature by vernal showers, lib. i. 251 to ver. 293; of the ravages committed by tempestuous winds, lib. i. 272 to ver. 295; of the difficulty of his undertaking, and of his affection to his patron Memmius, lib. i. 920 to ver. 950;

† *Humana ante oculis foedè cum vita jaceret,
In terris oppressa gravi sub RELIGIONE,
Quae caput e coeli regionibus ostendebat
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans;
Primum graius homo mortales tollere contra
Est oculos ausus* —————

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where after mentioning the great obscurity of his subject, he breaks out into that enthusiastic rapture ;

— Sed acri

*Percussit thyrsos Laudis, spes magna meum cor
Et simul incussit suavem mi in pectus amorem
Musarum, quo nunc instinctus mente vigenti
Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo ; juvat integros accedere fontes, &c.*

The second book opens with a sublime description of a true philosopher, standing on the top of the temple of Wisdom, and looking down with pity and contempt *on the busy hum of men*. This is followed by a forcible exhortation to temperance of each kind, and by that account of the pleasures of a country life (ver. 24 to ver. 36.) which Virgil hath exactly copied at the end of his second book of the Georgic. The fears and the cares that infest human life are afterwards personified in the following manner.

*Re verâque METUS hominum, CURAEQUE sequaces
Nec metuunt sonitus armorum, nec fera tela ;
Audacterque inter reges, rerumque potentes
Versantur, neque fulgorem reverentur ab auro.*

These images are surely far superior to those admired ones of Horace,

— Nec CURAS laqueata circum

Teſta volantes —

Scandit aeratas vitioſa naves

CURA —

I know not how to resist the temptation of giving the reader the following landscape of a distant mountain with flocks feeding on the side of it.

Nam

*Nam saepe in colli tendentes pabula laeta,
 Lanigerae reptant pecudes, quo quamque vocantes
 Invitant herbae, gemmantes rore recenti ;
 Et satiati agni ludunt, blandèque coniscant,
 Omnia quae nobis longè confusa videntur,
 Et veluti in viridi candor consistere colli.*

L. ii. 317.

And I could wish to have room to set down the description that immediately follows, lib. ii. 324 to 330, of a field of battle, or the subsequent one of a cow's lamenting her calf that was sacrificed. There is something so truly pathetic, that I must trespass on the reader's patience, and give it him.

*At mater virides saltus orbata peragrans
 Linqvit humi pedibus vestigia pressa bibulcis,
 Omnia convivens oculis loca, si queat usquam
 Conspicere amissum foetum, completque querelis
 Frondiferum nemus adsistens ; et crebra revisit
 Ad stabulum, desiderio perfixa juvenci.*

L. ii. 355.

In the beginning of the third book, which opens with the praises of Epicurus, is a passage that of itself, without alledging other instances, is sufficient to shew the strength and sublimity of our author's imagination. At the sound of thy voice (says he, addressing himself to the father of his philosophy) the Terrors of the mind (here personified) fly away with fear and astonishment.

*Nam simul ac † RATIO tua caepit vociferari
Naturam rerum haud divinâ mente coortum
Diffuginnt animi † TERRORES.*

The walls of the world suddenly part asunder ! I look down into the immense void ! and distinctly see all it contains !

———— *Moenia mundi
Discedunt, totum video per inane geri res.*

This image always puts me in mind of that exalted one in Milton, which is so strongly conceived.

On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyfs
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,[†]
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains to assault
Heav'n's height, and with the center mix the pole.
Par. Lost, B. vii. 210.

Our poet adds, in lines as finished and as smooth as Virgil's that he there saw the happy and undisturbed state of the gods.

*Apparet divum numen, sedesque quietae,
Quas neque concutiunt venti, neque nubila nimbis
Aspergunt, neque nix acri concreta pruina
Cana cadens violat ; semperque innubilis aether
Integit, et largè diffuso lumine ridet : —
At contra nusquam apparent Acherusia templa.*
L. iii. 25.

On

† Persons.

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On the perusal of this passage, can one forbear crying out with the author ?

*His tibi me rebus, quaedam divina voluptas
Percipit atque horror !*

The descriptions of a person in a deep lethargy, lib. iii. ver. 465 ; of the effects of drunkenness, ver. 475 ; of the falling sickness, ver. 486 ; and the noble prosopopoeia, ver. 944, where Nature is introduced chiding her ungrateful sons for their folly and discontent, are equal to any thing in the Roman poesy ; as is likewise the conclusion of this book, where the poet allegorizes all the punishments of hell, from ver. 991 to 1036. 'Tis hard to determine whether the poetry or impiety of this third book (where many weak arguments are brought against the immortality of the soul) be greatest.

In the fourth book our author hath painted the evils and inconveniences attending the passion of love in the liveliest terms. No poet seems to have felt more strongly than Lucretius. For this see the following description of jealousy, and observe the minute circumstances it enumerates.

*Aut quod in ambiguo verbum jaculata reliquit
Quod cupido adfixum cordi vivescit ut ignis ;
Aut nimium jactare oculos, aliumve tueri
Quod putat, in vultuque videt vestigia risus,*

L. iv. 1131.

I know not what apology to make to the reader for such a number of quotations : but I have always thought that general criticism, without producing particular passages, was both useless and

unentertaining. Besides, I look upon the giving him these descriptions, to belike leading him through a gallery adorned with the most exquisite paintings. I am sure there is no piece by the hand of Guido or Carrache, that exceeds the following groupe of allegorical personages.

*It Ver, et Venus, et Veneris prænuntius ante
Pinnatus graditur Zephyrus, vestigia propter.
Flora quibus mater, præspersgens ante viam
Cuncta coloribus egregiis, et odoribus opplet.
Inde loci sequitur Calor aridus, et Comes una
Pulverulenta Ceres, et Etesia Flabra Aquilonum.
Inde Autumnus adit, graditur simul Erius Evan :
Inde aliae Tempestates, Ventique sequuntur,
Altitonans Volturnus, et Auster fulmine pollens :
Tandem Bruma nives adfert, pigrumque rigorem
Reddit, Hyems sequitur, crepitans ac dentibus Algas.*

L. v. 736.

This fifth book concludes with a description of the uncivilized state of man, together with the origin and progress of government, arts, and sciences. The poetical beauties it contains are so many and so various, that they well merit a particular discussion ; but intending to publish a translation of this part of Lucretius with critical observations, I wave all farther mention of it at present.

The sixth book is the least obscure and abstruse of any, being wholly taken up with describing the appearances of nature, and accounting for some seeming prodigies. The plague with which the whole poem concludes being more known and perhaps more read than any other part of it, I shall not point out any particular passages.

I could

I could not forbear saying thus much of an author, whose fertile and strong imagination, whose nervous and forcible expression seem not sufficiently regarded. The arguments of impiety which the poem contains, are indeed so sophistical and weak, and have been so many times solidly confuted, that I do not see the danger some are apprehensive of from a diligent perusal of this noble work.

It were much to be wished that the cardinal de POLIGNAC had any of the force and fire of Lucretius, whom he has endeavoured to answer : his arguments are indeed strong, but he has not a spark of poetry : his versification is smooth, but not enough varied with different pauses ; and he is generally too verbose and diffuse. One merit must be allowed him, that of perspicuity in expressing and explaining the most difficult subjects : for perhaps there are few accounts of the nature of free-will so clear and convincing, as what he has given us in the fifth book of his *Anti-Lucretius*, ver. 1164 et seq. 'Tis great pity he did not follow the sound philosophy of Newton, instead of that of his whimsical countryman. Why, says Voltaire, should we still continue to substitute the reveries of Decartes, in the place of the reveries of Lucretius ? *Oeuvres de Voltaire*, tom. 10. 304.

So much hath already been said of VIRGIL (who should next be mentioned) both in these reflections, in the foregoing notes, and particularly in the prefatory dedication, that any farther observations on him in this place are superfluous.

HORACE's Epistle to the Piso's, commonly called his Art of Poetry, seems never to have been so fully understood, and so judiciously explained, as lately by the author of Notes and a Commentary upon it.

He hath endeavoured to prove, that there is an artful concealed method observed throughout the whole; and that it is not a general system of poetry, as hath usually been imagined, but is confined merely to the state and defects of the drama in the age of Augustus. The Romans seem to have stood in need of such an instructor, for they had no extraordinary talents or taste for the stage. *In comoediâ maxime claudicamus*, says the impartial Quintilian: notwithstanding Varro's opinion, that if the Muses were to speak Latin, they would speak in Plautus's language; notwithstanding our forefathers talk so highly of Caecilius; and notwithstanding Terence's writings were attributed to Scipio Africanus. He adds the reason with his usual elegance; *Vix levem consequimur umbram, adeo ut mihi sermo ipse Romanus non recipere videatur, illam solis concessam Atticis Venerem, quando eam ne Graeci quidem in alio genere linguae obtinuerint*. Instit. Orat. lib. II. And as to tragedy the Romans have made no considerable figure in it; but Quintilian assures us (and in this one instance I can with difficulty give credit to him) that the Thyestes of Varius was comparable to any tragedy, of the Greeks; and that the Medaea of Ovid evidently shewed, how much he could have excelled, if he had chosen to restrain, rather than give a loose to his genius. Instit. Orat. l. II. The unnatural and affected Seneca cannot be mentioned without distaste. It is needless to add what almost every schoolboy is acquainted with, that the precepts of Horace are chiefly drawn from Aristotle's Poetics, are indeed the most useful commentary on that inestimable treatise, and will best enable us to judge of the ancient stage: but he hath likewise inserted many precepts, peculiarly adapted to the use of his countrymen: and hath delivered the whole with

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with that graceful negligence that ought to be the predominant quality of epistolary writings both in verse and prose ; while they should

———familiarily convey
The truest notions in the easiest way.
He who supreme in judgment as in wit,
Might boldly censure, as he boldly writ,
Yet judg'd with coolness, tho' he sung with fire:
His precepts teach but what his works inspire.

POPE's *Essay on Criticism*, ver. 656.

Under this head (in which I shall include all the Writers on this subject) it will be unpardonable to omit MARCUS HIERONYMUS VIDA, one of the first restorers of polite literature and just criticism. His Poetics have been always deservedly read and admired as a fine didactic poem, and considering the time in which he wrote, were of great use in diffusing a good taste among his countrymen ; and from thence over all Europe. The highest panegyric he ever received was from Mr. Pope in the following passage, which gave occasion to the reading and publishing him in England, where formerly he was but little known :

But see ! each Muse in Leo's golden days,
Starts from her trance, and trims her wither'd bays ;
Rome's ancient Genius, o'er its ruins spread,
Shakes off the dust and rears his reverend head ;
Then Sculpture and her sister arts revive,
Stones leap'd to form, and rocks began to live ;
With sweetest notes each rising temple rung,
A Raphael painted, and a Vida sung.
Immortal Vida ! on whose honour'd brow,
The poet's bays and critic's ivy grow :

Cremona now shall ever boast thy name,
As next in place to Mantua, next in fame !

The characteristics of Vida seem to be elegance, perspicuity, and purity ; but he frequently wants majesty and force. He rises however into poetry at the end of his first book, and in the middle of his second, where he describes the poet under the influence of inspiration, returning upon him powerfully after a languid interval, and an absence of the poetic inclination :

———*Unde haec tam clara repente
Tempestas ? Deus, ecce Deus ! jam corda fatigat,
Alius insinuat venis, penitusque per artus
Diditur, atque faces saevas sub pectore versat.
Nec se jam capit acer agens calor, igneaeque intus
Vis saevit, totoque agitat se corpore numen.
Ille autem exultans jaëtat jam non sua verba,
Oblitusque hominem mirum sonat : haud potis ignem,
Excutere, invitum miratur se ire, rapique
Praecipitem, te Phoebe vocans, te Phoebe frementem
Vociferans, plenusque Deo, stimulisque subaëtus
Haud placidis ; non ille dapum, non ille quietis,
Aut somni memor hanc potis est deponere curam.*

Whence shot this sudden flash that gilds the pole ?
The god, the god comes rushing on his soul ;
Fires with aethereal vigor every part,
Thro' ev'ry trembling limb he seems to dart,
Works in each vein, and swells his rising heart. }
Deep in his breast the heav'nly tumult plays,
And sets his mounting spirits on a blaze.
Nor can the raging flames themselves contain,
For the whole god descends into the man.
He quits mortality, and knows no bounds,
But sings inspir'd with more than human sounds.
Nor

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Nor from his breast can shake th' immortal load,
But pants and raves impatient of the god ;
And, rapt beyond himself, admires the force
That drives him on reluctant to the course.
He calls on Phoebus, by the god oppress'd,
Who breathes excessive spirit in his breast ;
No force of thirst or hunger can controul
The fierce, the ruling transport of his soul.

PITT's *Translation of Vida*, p. 49.
2d Edit.

The precepts of Vida principally respect the Epopoeia, but are most of them applicable to every other species of poetry. In his third and last book he hath treated of poetical style in general : hath examined the force and propriety of every figure of speech with great accuracy and true taste ; hath laid down some judicious rules, on that difficult and delicate task, correction ; and concludes with a panegyric on the poems of Virgil. It ought to be observed, that all succeeding writers on this subject are more indebted to Vida, than he was to his predecessors in the same way.

BOILEAU's Art of Poetry has a brevity in its precepts, a perspicacity in its observations, and an energy in its style, seldom to be found in the diffusive writings of his countrymen. He hath delivered rules for every species of poetry in its regular gradations from the pastoral to the epic : only 'tis observable that he speaks not a syllable of the didactic. We have in this highly finish'd work, * which however consists but of four short canto's,
all

* *Ou Corneille eût trouvé beaucoup à apprendre, says M. de Voltaire.*

all that could be expected from a man of strong sense and keen observation (tho' perhaps of no warm poetical genius) who had spent his life in studying and defending the ancients, had formed his taste upon the Greek and Roman models alone, and therefore always practised and recommended a manly simplicity of style and sentiment.

I chuse to speak of Mr. POPE's Essay on Criticism in the words of his friend and commentator. "When the reader considers the regularity of the plan, the masterly conduct of each part, the penetration into nature, and the compass of learning so conspicuous throughout, he should at the same time know it was the work of an author who had not attained to the twentieth year of his age."

Altho' there are some sensible observations, and perhaps a few sparks of poetry in the Duke of BUCKINGHAM's Essay on Poetry, and in that of Lord ROSCOMMON on translated verse, yet I must presume to think, that the reputation they have gained, is in a great measure owing to the rank of their authors, and to the age in which they were written; when criticism had not spread so widely, nor was so well understood, as apparently it hath been since their times.

I am doubtful whether I ought to mention OVID's Art of Love in this list of didactic poems, from the libertine nature of its subject. With respect both to his style and matter, one may apply to him what Quintilian says of another, *abundat dulcibus vitiis*.

There is great dispute among the critics, whether MANILIUS wrote his astronomical poem in the
age

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age of Augustus, as he himself affirms he did. Many instances of such language, and such versification as cannot be met with in any other poet of that time, may be found in his work: for which the curious reader may see the third dialogue of Mr. Spence's *Polymetis*, page 25. Whatever use his poem may be of to astronomers, who are inclined to consider the systems of the ancients, 'tis certain that there is not a grain of genius or poetical spirit to be discovered throughout the whole, tho' on a subject so susceptible of poetry. And indeed, what could one expect from a writer who made the following cold declaration at the very beginning of his work, and which he strictly verifies in the course of it:

Ornai res ipsa negat, contenta doceri.

At the restoration of literature under the glorious pontificate of Leo X. several true geniuses arose. Among the rest FRACASTORIUS, who wrote the *Syphilis*. He was unfortunate in the choice of a subject, very difficult to be treated in an ornamental manner: yet 'tis surprizing to see how he has enlivened so unpromising a theme by the beauty and dignity of his language. See how he hath described a blooming and beautiful youth, labouring under this dreadful distemper:

*Paulatim ver id nitidum, flos ille juventae
Disperiit, vis illa animi; tum squalida tabes
Artus (horrendum!) miseros obduxit, et altè
Grandia turgebant faedis abscessibus ossa.
Ulceras (prole divum pietatem!) informia pulchros
Pascebant oculos, et diae lucis amorem,
Pascebantque acri corrosas vulnere nares.
Illum Alpes vicinae, illum vaga flumina flerunt;
Illum omnes Ollicque Deae, Eridanique puellae*

Fle-

*Fleverunt, nemorumque Deae rurisque puellae ;
Sebinusque alto gemitum lacus edidit amne.*

Syphilis, L. 1.

The * style of Fracastorius is not made up of shreds and patches, and ends of lines collected from Virgil and Horace, (as are several copies of verses in our *Musae Anglicanae*)^u; but it is one continued thread equally woven thro' the whole piece. There is a good deal of imagination in the third book, where he describes the manner of finding the Hyacus in America. In a word, the *Syphiles* is perhaps the best conducted and most finished of modern didactic poems in Latin verse. It doubtless eminently exceeds the silk-worms of his countryman and cotemporary Vida †, (who hath too closely and servilely copied the bees of Virgil) and the gardens of Rapin, of whom the French after their manner boast so highly ; who is a feeble and flegmatic poet, and hath filled his work, under the notion of digressions, with many puerile and extravagant fables, the *Caricatura's* of Ovid ; whose idle

turns

* See his beautiful epistle to Baptista Turrianus of Verona, concerning his way of life and method of passing his time with his family ; together with that to J. Turrianus on the death of his sons. The two books of his JOSEPH are not equal to the *Syphilis*.

† However the following lines are elegant and pretty, on the worms being turned into butterflies.

*Haerent attonitae rerum novitate, nec audent
Remigio alarum se aperto credere coelo,
Dissimilesque sui tacitè nova corpora secum
Mirari, formâ nec sese agnoscere in illâ ;
Cornua mirantur fronti, mirantur et alas,
Et vires nil supra audent tentare priores
Diffisi, memoresque sui. —*

turns and witticisms he hath likewise frequently imitated. There is more pleasure, says Addison, in the little platform of a garden which Virgil gives us about the middle of the fourth Georgic, than in all the spacious walks and water-works of Rapin.

The art of painting seems to be the finest and fruitfulest subject for a didactic poem. What FRESNOY has written on that subject is exceedingly dry, prosaic, and unentertaining; for he has only given the mechanic rules of a painter; it is to be wished that some true genius would undertake to treat it as a poet.

The *Praedium Rusticum* of the Jesuit VANIÈRE, is a long and languid production; but from the labour of the writer, who has collected some curious particulars relating to the management of the farmers of his country, it may perhaps answer one purpose.

The Italians boast much of a poem on Agriculture, *La Coltivazione di Luigi Alamanni*. He wrote it in France under the protection of Francis I. It is in six books, and in blank verse; and is esteemed pure Italian. But the subject is very little diversified with digressions, and not very poetically treated.

They have likewise a didactic poem on the management of bees, but it is little more than a translation of Virgil's fourth book, omitting the story of Aristaeus, with a few additional precepts of the author. It was written by GIOVANNI RUCCELLAI, and ends with an address to his intimate friend Trissino, the author of that cool and insipid epic poem, *Italia Liberata*; but whose memory ought to be revered for having given us
the

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the first regular modern tragedy, in blank verse, his *Sophonisba*; as *Ruccellai* himself produced the second that was seen in Italy, entitled, *Rosmunda*.

Before I conclude these reflections, it will, I presume, be expected that I speak a few words on the didactic poets of our own nation.

PHILIPS's *Cyder* is a very close and happy imitation of the *Georgic*, and conveys to us the fullest idea of Virgil's *manner*: whom he hath exactly followed in a pregnant brevity of style; in throwing in frequent moral reflections, in varying the method of giving his precepts, in his digressions, and in his happy address in returning again to his subject; in his knowledge and love of philosophy, medicine, agriculture and antiquity, and in a certain *primaeval* simplicity of manners, which is so conspicuous in both.

If there be any fault in Philips, it is, perhaps, his insertion of many images that excite laughter, and are contrary to the majesty of the didactic Muse; and his having used too many ellisions, *exotique* and antique expressions, and transpositions, under the notion of strengthening his verse, and of resembling Milton; who, by the way, is not so uniformly obsolete and difficult in his diction, as is sometimes imagined; but makes use of these uncommon and unfamiliar phrases chiefly when he is describing things that lie out of the compass of nature, and that are marvellous and strange, such as hell, chaos and heaven.

SOMERVILLE in his *CHACE*, writes with all the spirit and fire of an eager sportsman.

Fare-

Farewell Cleora ! here deep sunk in down
Slumber secure with happy dreams amus'd——

——— Me other joys invite,
The horn sonorous calls, the pack awak'd
Their mattins chant, nor brook my long delay.
My courser hears their voice ; see there with ears
And tail erect, neighing he paws the ground ;
Fierce rapture kindles in his red'ning eyes,
And boils in every vein.—— B. ii. 84.

The descriptions of hunting the hare, the fox, and the stag, are extremely spirited, and place the very objects before our eyes ; of such consequence is it for a man to write on that which he hath frequently felt with pleasure. He neglects his versification sometimes, and there are doubtless great inequalities, both with respect to harmony and expression, in the poem. He hath failed in describing the madness that sometimes rages among hounds, and particularly in his account of the effects of the bite of a mad dog on a man.

To describe so difficult a thing, gracefully and poetically, as the effects of a distemper on the human body, was reserved for Dr. ARMSTRONG ; who accordingly hath nobly executed it, at the end of the third book of his Art of preserving health, where he hath given us that pathetic account of the sweating sickness. There is a classical correctness and closeness of style in this poem, that are truly admirable, and the subject is raised and adorned by numberless poetical images. What can be more pleasing than his description of a healthy situation for a house ?

See ! where enthron'd in adamantinè state,
Proud of her bards imperial Windsor sits ;
There

There chuse thy seat, in some aspiring grove
 Fast by the slowly-winding Thames ; or where
 Broader she laves fair Richmond's green retreats ;
 (Richmond that sees an hundred villas rise
 Rural or gay). O from the summer's rage
 O wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides
 Umbrageous Ham.

This ends with a well-conducted prosopopoeia.

Green rise the Kentish hills in chearful air ;
 But on the marshy plains that Essex spreads
 Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet.
 For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
 With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
 Quartana there presides ; a meagre fiend
 Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force
 Compress'd the slothful Naiads of the fens.

B. i. 108.

In how lofty a manner hath he introduced his precepts concerning drinking water ?

Now come ye Naiads, to the fountains lead !
 Now let me wander through your gelid reign :
 I turn to view th' enthusiastic wilds
 By mortal elf untrod. I hear the din
 Of waters thundering o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
 With holy reverence I approach the rocks-
 Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
 Here from the desert down the rumbling steep
 First springs the Nile ; here bursts the sounding Po
 In angry waves ; Euphrates hence devolves
 A mighty flood to water half the East ;
 And there in Gothic solitude reclin'd
 The chearless Tanais pours his hoary urn.
 What solemn twilight ! what stupendous shades
 Enwrap these infant floods ! Thro' every nerve
 A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear
 Glides o'er my frame !

B. ii. 352, &c.
 In

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In short, this author hath evidently shewn, that there is no subject but what is capable of being exalted into poetry by a genius.

There is a sublimity of sentiment *, an energy of diction, a spirit unextinguished by correctness and rhyme, to be found in Mr. POPE's Essay on Man, that will ever render it the honour of our nation and language. And it is not my province at present to determine, what some are apt to dispute, whether or no this poem (in the words of Dr. Warburton) " hath a precision, force, and " closeness of connection, rarely to be met with " even in the most formal treatises of philosophy ?"

The PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION are, in their very nature, a most proper and pregnant subject for a didactic poem. The amiable author who happily fixt on these as his subject, it must be allowed by the severest critic, hath done them ample justice ; whether we consider his glowing and animated style, his lively and picturesque images † ; the graceful and harmonious flow of his numbers ; or the noble spirit of poetical enthusiasm, which breathes through his whole work. But that I may not lose myself in a wide field of panegyric, I will produce the following three passages, in which images of Greatness, Wonderfulness, and Beauty
(from

* See particularly Ep. i. ver. 267 to the end. If there be any fault in this poem, it is perhaps the mixing droll and burlesque images with serious doctrines : such is that line (taken from Charron, Book i. on Wisdom)

See man for mine, replies a pamper'd goose.

† See particularly the description of PLEASURE, VIRTUE, and PAIN, Book ii. 409, &c, of a solemn wood, and particularly ver. 290. B. iii. and of a poet at the time of his first conceiving some great design, B. iii. ver. 373.

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(from the perception of which all the pleasures of poetry and the imagination principally flow) are thus nobly exemplify'd.

I. GREATNESS.

—The high-born soul
 Disdains to rest his heav'n aspiring wing
 Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth
 And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
 Through fields of air ; pursues the flying storm ;
 Rides on the volley'd lightning thro' the heav'ns ;
 Or yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
 Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars
 The blue profound, and hov'ring o'er the sun
 Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
 Of light ; beholds his unrelenting sway
 Bend the reluctant planets and absolve
 The fated rounds of time. Thence far effus'd
 She darts her swiftness up the long career
 Of devious comets ; through its burning signs
 Exulting circles the perennial wheel
 Of nature, and looks back on all the stars,
 Whose blended light, as with a milky zone,
 Invests the orient. Now amaz'd she views
 Th' empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
 Beyond this concave heav'n, their calm abode ;
 And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
 Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,
 Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things ;
 Ev'n on the barriers of the world untir'd
 She meditates th' eternal depth below ;
 Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
 She plunges ; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up
 In that immense of being. There her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal.—

2. WON-

2. WONDERFULNESS.

——What need words
 To paint its power ? For this, the daring youth
 Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
 In foreign climes to rove : the pensive sage
 Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
 Hangs o'er the sickly taper ; and untir'd
 The virgin follows, with enchanted step,
 The mazes of some wild and wond'rous tale
 From morn to eve ; unmindful of her form,
 Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
 The wishes of the youth, when every maid
 With envy pin'd. Hence finally, by night
 The village-matron, round the blazing hearth,
 Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,
 Breathing astonishment ! of witching rhymes,
 And evil spirits of the death-bed call
 To him who robb'd the widow and devour'd
 The orphan's portion ; of unquiet souls
 Ris'n from the grave to ease the heavy guilt
 Of deeds in life conceal'd ; of shapes that walk
 At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
 The torch of hell about the murd'rer's bed.
 At ev'ry solemn pause the croud recoil
 Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
 With shiv'ring sighs : till eager for th' event,
 Around the beldame all erect they hang,
 Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.

3. BEAUTY.

——Brightest progeny of heav'n !
 How shall I trace thy features ? where select
 The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?

Haste

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Hasten then, my song, thro' nature's wide expanse,
 Hasten then and gather all her comeliest wealth,
 Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,
 Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
 To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly
 With laughing Autumn to th' Atlantic isles
 And range with him th' Hesperian field and sea,
 Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
 The branches shoot with gold; where'er his step
 Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters glow
 With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
 As with the blushes of an evening sky?
 Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,
 Where, gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd shade,
 The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood
 Reflects purpleal Tempe's pleasant scene?
 Fair Tempe! haunt belov'd of sylvan pow'rs,
 Of nymphs and fauns; where in the golden age
 They play'd in secret on the shady brink
 With ancient Pan, while round their choral steps
 Young hours and genial gales with constant hand
 Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial
 And Spring's Elysian bloom. [dews,

I must beg the reader's leave to lay before him
 one passage more, with which I shall conclude,
 both because it is a proper instance of our author's
 genius, and because it contains a strong and season-
 able exhortation to the study of the Grecian lite-
 rature, which is at present so strangely neglected
 among us, that persons are not wanting who set up
 for scholars and critics, without even pretending
 ever to have perused the Greek classics.

Genius of ancient Greece! whose faithful steps
 Well-pleas'd I follow thro' the sacred paths
 Of nature and of science; nurse divine
 Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!

O! let the breath of thy extended praise
 Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
 Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts
 Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm
 That sooths this vernal evening into smiles,
 I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
 Of strife and low ambition to attend
 Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
 By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.
 Descend, propitious! to my favour'd eye;
 Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
 As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
 With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
 To see thee rend the pageants of his throne;
 And at the lightning of thy lifted spear
 Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
 Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphant songs,
 Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike fires
 Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth
 Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way
 Thro' fair Lyceum's walk, the green retreats
 Of Academus, and the thymy vale,
 Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
 Ilissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
 In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store
 Of these auspicious fields, may I unblam'd
 Transplant some living blossoms, to adorn
 My native clime: while far above the flight
 Of fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
 The springs of ancient wisdom; while I join
 Thy name, thrice honour'd! with th' immortal
 Of nature; while to my compatriot youth [praise
 I point the high example of thy sons,
 And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

Book i. ver. 567.

The END of VOL. I.

